WORLD SOCCER

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The *INTERNATIONAL* Magazine

FEBRUARY 1977

TERRY NEIL (Man.) and ALAN HUDSON Arsenal

World SOCCER

Be brave, Don!

DON REVIE must be sick and tired of managers, players, journalists and members of the general public choosing his England teams for him. The free "advice" offered to the England manager is endless and though WORLD SOCCER does not expect Mr Revie to lend an attentive ear to us, we would just like to add a few selections of our own.

A consensus of opinion among the staff members of this magazine threw up some interesting proposals. We have long campaigned for realistic judgements on the so-called "world class" players in the Football League and we feel it is time to accept that while some can make the transition from club to international level, others simply cannot.

Players of genuine skill are more likely to succeed than those who disguise deficiencies in ability with high work-rate, running power, competitiveness and so on. England has precious few players with flair but isn't it time the likes of Duncan McKenzie and Trevor Francis were given the opportunity to enter the international arena?

We've heard all the criticisms of players like McKenzie . . . they don't work hard enough, disappear from games, etc., etc. But one flash of inspiration from a McKenzie can be worth more than 90 minutes' unproductive graft from players who simply aren't good enough for England.

Players who shine for their clubs in the Football League often disappoint for England because they cannot adapt, cannot function with an unfamiliar cast around them. Paradoxically individualists like McKenzie and, to a lesser extent, Francis blend together better than those less able to improvise.

If England are to beat Italy in November we will require an attacking force that once on the field can fathom out ways to unlock what will be a very strong defensive line-up.

In the meantime it would be nice to see England selecting inventive players given the chance to express themselves. We may not beat Italy, may still go out of the World Cup, but better to be defeated with a bit of style than with dull pedestrian tactics.

We would like to see McKenzie, Francis and Clive Woods facing Holland at Wembley this month. We would find places, too, for Trevor Brooking, Tony Currie and Brian Greenhoff, in mid-field.

But what of the back-four? Good, let alone brilliant, full-backs are scarce. John Gidman of Aston Villa appeals to us, but he is almost alone. And it is time Kevin Beattie had a regular place, in the middle of the defence. Ray Clemence is still England's best goalkeeper.

Mr Revie has a difficult job. But England's World Cup future is all about goals — how many we score in two matches against Luxembourg and getting through Italy's defence. Francis and McKenzie could be the answer.

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FRONT COVER PICTURE
Kevin Beattie (6) of Ipswich clears his lines from an attack by Gordon McQueen (left) and Joe Jordan (light shirts) of Leeds United.

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incorporating SOCCER STAR
The INTERNATIONAL Magazine

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1977

ERIC BATTY

Brazil and

ONE OR two continental soccer magazines produce a league table similar to that shown on these pages but all without exception award two points for a win and one for a draw. Clearly this favours the teams that play (and win) most often, and by contrast, I stick to my formula established years ago of considering every national team in terms of percentage success. Very simply, the number of points gained (on the usual basis) is expressed as a faction of the points they *could* have won and then converted into a percentage. Thus Brazil played 10 games and with 19 points from 20, multiplying 19/20 × 100/1 you get 95%.

Of course under my system a team could play only one game — win it — and have a 100% record but I guard against this by omitting any team that didn't play at least four matches. Under this condition, East Germany did rather well, unbeaten in their four games but under their own system which considers Olympic Games matches as full internationals they would have done even better for they took the gold in Montreal. My figures are those for only non-Olympic games.

Dropped

The DDR in my view have taken a wrong turning; manager Georg Buschner now apparently preferring good strong players to those with class, or perhaps he doesn't think he has enough class players. Whatever the reason his team is rather more physical than I would like it to be. Perhaps he might change his mind having dropped a vital home World Cup qualifying point in a 1-1 draw against Turkey.

Though nothing should now surprise anyone in football, the top teams of 1975 have suffered a severe setback and slid downhill rapidly during the last 12 months. In 1975 the top three teams were 1. Yugoslavia, 2. Poland and 3. the U.S.S.R. then represented by Dynamo Kiev.

For 1976, while the Yugoslavs have lost a lot of players (again) and can be understood, it is significant that all three teams are now under new management. And of this trio, the team that fared best was the U.S.S.R. who occupy 22nd place, with Yugoslavia 24th and Poland 29th.

Poland provide a curious case. After winning the 1972 Olympics and third place in the 1974 World Cup under Kazimierz Gorski, they appeared to run out of morale in 1976. At all events, they lost their first five games and though unfortunate in the Olympics, Gorski resigned. Even more curious, his successor Jacek Gmoch, used the same players as Gorski but seemed better able to motivate them and under his guidance they won their two remaining matches, both vital World Cup games, away to Portugal (2-0) and at home to Cyprus (5-0). Gorski has now gone off to Greece where he is in charge of Panathinaikos and all Poland will be hoping that Gmoch can work a new miracle.

Brazil come out as top dogs in 1976, also under a new manager, Oswaldo Brandao. They didn't look particularly good against England in the USA but won 1-0 with a late goal and swamped Italy. But apart from their three games in the USA (Team America fixtures are excluded from my figures), they played all their games in South America.

Referees

Still with Brazil, one-time super star Rivelino appears to be very temperamental these days, always niggling at referees and being sent off in several internationals. Though a good player still and a veteran of 1970 and 1974 he provides much needed experience in a basically inexperienced side. One wonders if Brandao can afford to play him in competitive games, knowing he could at any time be left with ten men.

At one time Brandao was determined to play throughout the World Cup with only home based players, but he has named Luis Pereira amongst his 25 man squad for the first qualifying game away to Colombia in Bogota on February 20 and asked his new club, Atletico Madrid to honour their contract and have Pereira in Bogota at least 48 hours before the game. I have liked Pereira, an attacking *libero* since I first saw him on Brazil's European tour in 1973 and regard this as a good move by Brandao. Pereira is in fact the only exile really worth bringing back.

West Germany and Scotland share second place in the 1976 table though there are interesting points to be made about both sides. The West Germans get the edge, not only because they were unbeaten but because of the usual rule, that they have a slightly better goal average.

Since the 1974 World Cup which West Germany won they have been hard pressed to find adequate replacements for three forward stars who retired from the international game after that competition: Wolfgang Overath, Jurgen Grabowski and above all, Gerd Muller.

A swarm of players have been tried in the vacant roles but there is still no sign of satisfactory replacements for the front three (Grabowski and Muller, retired) and Jupp Heynckes and Bernd Holzenbein (who I never thought much of anyway) who are both past 30 already. Despite having to experiment with front players the Germans have an outstanding record over the last three years:

	P	W	D	L	F	A
1974	15	11	2	2	27	9
1975	7	3	3	1	11	5
1976	7	5	2	0	21	5
Totals	29	19	7	3	59	19

Scotland look on the surface to have had a very good year — and to Scottish fans of course, any year in which they beat England 'must' be a good one. But looking a little deeper at the teams they played, Willie Ormond's men played six of their seven matches within the United Kingdom.

At home they played two continental sides, beating Finland 6-0 and Switzerland (ranked only 32nd) by a mere 1-0. The only game Scotland played outside Great Britain was the World Cup qualifying match with Czechoslovakia in Prague. This they lost by 2-0 and it seems clear that the Scots are suffering from the same problem as England. Beating the hell out of Wales and Northern Ireland might be what the fans want to see, but what the players need is experience against top quality foreign opposition, preferably away from home.

Six of England's ten games played in 1976 were staged in Great Britain and significantly the three games England lost were all away from home — in Glasgow against Scotland, in the USA against Brazil, and in Italy against Rome.

Disposal

A year ago it must have seemed to Welsh fans that they had a good side, and to be fair, considering the relatively small number of players they have at their disposal, having to field men from teams in the lower Divisions of the Football league, they don't do bad. But being Britain's only team to reach the quarter finals of the European championship was due to the fact — as I thought at the time — that they were in an easy group.

Certainly Wales wouldn't find Hungary a pushover now. But surveying the results of the British teams it is still clear that with the number of international matches they can play severely restricted, it is long past the time when the British championship should be abandoned so that everyone, England and Northern Ireland alike, can play more games against the best available foreign opposition.

Mention of Hungary reminds me that they, too, are under new management since they were eliminated by Wales from the European competition. Lajos Baroti has been recalled and is building an essentially young team with a stiffening of experience that has already begun to look promising.

They haven't played any of the big guns — West Germany, Holland, Italy or England away from home — but they beat the touring

presents his annual review

stay 'home' top the chart

Argentinians 2-0 and were unbeaten over ten games. The last time Baroti was in charge the Hungarians qualified for the final stages of the World Cup — in 1966 when they played some fine football — and one must hope that for the good of the game he can build a new team with players like Bene, Albert and Farkas . . . as they were in 1966.

Having already mentioned England but been side-tracked, it is interesting to note that England slipped from fifth place in 1975 (won 5 drawn 3 lost 1) to ninth in 1976, suggesting that the 'daylight' Don Revie said he could see after 1-0 win in the Welsh Centenary match was only an illusion. Having tried almost 50 players and spent two years at it, he is in my view as far away as ever from creating a good England team.

As I have often said, one must not lay all the blame for England failures at the door of manager Revie. Unless the clubs produce the players Revie cannot pick them, but I have been more than a little concerned at things like the ruin of Colin Todd (temporarily one hopes) and the selection of big strong players like Mills, Clement and Cherry.

Top class

Zico may not be all that the Brazilians crack him up to be but if ever a really top class forward gets in amongst that trio of England defenders he will play havoc . . . as Causio did to a lesser degree in Rome.

Excluding the Olympic Games Russia's record is still a poor one. At the end of the year Nikita Simonian took over and without any of the Dynamo Kiev players took his squad to fight over the 1978 World Cup fields. They drew 0-0 in Argentina but lost 0-2 to Brazil but clearly Simonian was only having a look at players who had not yet been given a chance at top level.

Having blooded the newcomers and made decisions about them, one would expect Simonian to rebuild the Russian side 'around' Dynamo Kiev stars like Blokhin, Kolotov and Burjak . . . and improve in 1977.

Although Denmark are amongst the few countries able to field a strong team of amateurs based on their First Division clubs, they have been at odds for years with the I.O.C. over allowing full internationals to play in the Olympics and they haven't helped their own cause by refusing to play their foreign based professionals in their full team.

In 1975 the Danes put up a dismal show: won 1 drawn 0 and lost 4, but for 1976 it was decided to field the strongest available team for the World Cup. At once things improved with a World Cup qualifying 5-1 win away to Cyprus . . . where England had been able to a competitive match by only 1-0. The Danes also managed a 2-1 away win over Sweden in Gothenburg, their first away victory over their neighbours in many years.

Holding Italy in Copenhagen to a 1-0 margin, the Danes also went down by the same score away to Portugal in an over-tough World Cup game but having zoomed up to 11th place they are still in with a chance. Much will depend on the return game with Portugal, which they can undoubtedly win.

Bulgaria are another side who appear to have improved but here the improvement is largely illusory. Their figures include three matches played in Japan — two wins and a draw — and if they appear to have overcome a goalscoring weakness, hitting 19 goals in 11 games this was achieved at the cost of conced-

● Continued on page 45

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS TABLE 1976

	P	W	D	L	Goals F	Goals A	% Success
1. Brazil	10	9	1	0	22	6	95.00
2. West Germany	7	5	2	0	21	5	85.71
3. Scotland	7	6	0	1	16	4	85.71
4. East Germany	4	2	2	0	11	2	75.00
5. Hungary	10	5	5	0	14	6	75.00
6. Holland	6	4	1	1	14	8	75.00
7. Argentina	14	8	3	3	22	14	67.85
8. Italy	9	6	0	3	21	13	66.66
9. England	10	6	1	3	18	11	65.00
10. Czechoslovakia	10	4	5	1	19	14	65.00
11. Denmark	8	4	2	2	16	5	62.50
12. Sweden	9	5	1	3	18	8	61.11
13. Eire	5	2	2	1	9	6	60.00
14. Portugal	5	3	0	2	6	7	60.00
15. France	6	2	3	1	9	6	58.30
16. Austria	7	4	0	3	11	9	57.10
17. Bulgaria	11	4	4	3	19	18	54.50
18. Turkey	5	1	3	1	11	8	50.00
19. Belgium	4	2	0	2	4	7	50.00
20. Finland	9	4	0	5	13	22	44.44
21. Paraguay	6	1	3	2	9	11	41.60
22. U.S.S.R.	11	2	5	4	10	13	40.90
23. Iceland	5	2	0	3	4	4	40.00
24. Yugoslavia	8	2	2	4	10	12	37.50
25. Greece	4	1	1	2	2	5	37.50
26. Norway	7	2	1	4	4	11	35.75
27. Wales	8	2	1	5	4	12	31.25
28. Romania	5	1	1	3	8	11	30.00
29. Poland	7	2	0	5	9	9	28.50
30. Uruguay	10	0	5	5	7	16	25.00
31. Peru	4	0	2	2	1	4	20.00
32. Switzerland	8	1	1	6	6	12	18.75
33. N. Ireland	6	0	2	4	3	13	16.66
34. Malta	4	0	1	3	1	14	12.50
35. Cyprus	4	0	0	4	2	17	00.00
NOTE. Ruled out because they had not played a minimum of four matches:							
Israel	3	1	2	0	3	2	66.66
Spain	3	1	1	1	2	3	50.00
Chile	2	0	1	1	0	2	25.00
Luxembourg	3	0	0	3	3	14	00.00

ALSHAZLY HAT-TRICK

FOR THE first time in Egypt's soccer history a player scored a hat-trick in the first 21 minutes of his own testimonial match and another player scored all his country's goals in two successive games against the same opposition.

Egypt and Arsenal captain Hassan Alshazly (AL Tersana in Arabic) scored the three goals in the match which marked not only his own retirement but also that of his fellow striker Mustafa Riad. The partnership for Arsenal and Egypt had spanned 19 years and they were this country's most feared duo.

Alshazly and Riad were chaired for a lap of honour after the match before being presented with "First Class Orders of Merit" conferred on them by President Sadat.

Alshazly was Arsenal's top scorer for 12 seasons and Riad netted eight goals in the Tokyo Olympic Games.

Mahmoud Alkhateeb, the centre forward of Egypt and Al Ahly, scored all his country's goals against Ethiopia in their two World Cup qualifying round matches. Alkhateeb netted three in Cairo and two in Addis Ababa.

When M. Nour, the Al Misri (of Port Said) striker (!) scored against Esco in a league match the linesman, A. Ibrahim, signalled for offside and the 'goal' was disallowed. A. Eid, a Misro reserve player, knocked out a linesman as a protest against his decision.

After treatment the unfortunate linesman resumed his duties but after the final whistle F. Radwan, the Misro goalkeeper, butted Mr. Ibrahim. The two aggressors have been suspended for life and this was the second such incident in successive months.

The poor linesman spent a week in hospital recovering from concussion.

The ESR (Egyptian State Railways) club, though fourteenth in the 15-team league, received 17,000 pounds in gate receipts when they lost 0-1 to Al Ahly, Egypt's most popular club. A crowd of 100,000 attended this super league match at the Cairo Stadium, and the game was not televised.

The crowd record in Egypt is 130,000, set in 1970 at the same stadium when Ismaili beat Englebert of Zaire in the African Cup Final.

Maybe people in the West do not appreciate what football means to the soccer fans of this country. It is a sacrifice, love, life, pleasure, happiness, paradise. Many fans prefer to attend a match than to have lunch.

Unpaid days off are commonplace when a match is being televised.

Al Tersana (Arsenal) threatened to withdraw from the super league if their match against Al Ahly was televised live. They were hoping to net around 15,000 pounds in gate receipts to aid their troubled finances.

The "A" category clubs get 750 pounds when a match is televised, despite the fact that television has a bad effect on the attendances. For security reasons all the Cairo clubs are obliged to play their league matches at the Cairo Stadium, yet friendly matches can be played at their own grounds.

Nandor Hidgekuti, the ex-Hungarian star who has led Al Ahly to two successive championship wins, faced a crisis when his team were annihilated in an away match by Al Mansoura (literally translated this means victorious).

Al Mansoura come form the rural city of Mansoura, the capital of the Dakahlia region where Louis IX was taken prisoner during the Crusades.

After their unexpected (2-0) defeat, it was rumoured that Hidgekuti would not renew his contract with Ahly. He was upset when some Ahly "fans" called him bad names. Matters were made worse when Ahly won their next two matches, against weak opposition, unconvincingly.

But the Al Ahly board announced that Hidgekuti was irreplaceable. They said that the team's bad performances were due to a long injury list, which included Zeezoo, who had treatment for his broken leg in London and at the famous Arsenal club.

Zeezoo spent two months in London, returning to Egypt just before Xmas to get ready for Egypt's next crucial World Cup game against Kenya in February.

Zeezoo also attended the Sporting Year Festival organised by Akhbar Alyour — the leading weekly magazine in Egypt — and to hear the result of the Player of the Year poll. Alkhateeb came first with Zeezoo second.

BAD SPELL FOR ROMANIA

IT HAS been another frustrating season in Rumania. The first year of Stefan Kovacs as F.A. Vice President and responsible for the national team has ended in failure.

The national team were beaten in the Olympic Games by the amateurs of France; lost to Bulgaria in the Balaknik Cup; could only draw 1-1 with Iran and so on.

Worse still was the fact that Kovacs' team showed no indication of progress. They never looked like a team, which wasn't altogether surprising because Kovacs made many changes after each game.

Romania begin their World Cup matches in April and are in a tough group with Yugoslavia and Spain. Dinu and Dumitru both missed the two matches against Bulgaria because loss of form and indiscipline are likely to be recalled along with Dudu Georgescu who has been injured.

Other players likely to be picked are midfielders Boloni (ASA Tg. Mures) and Multescu (Jiul), winger Troi (Steaua), centre half Satmareanu II (Dynamo). The problems lie with the lateral defenders and the retirement of left winger Lucescu.

Kovacs has announced that the national team will have long training sessions before the start of the "new"

BELGIAN TRIO PROGRESS

BELGIUM, like England, still have hopes of getting a team through to each of the three European club finals. As in 1976, Anderlecht and Bruges are through to the quarter finals of their respective competitions, while RWDM have joined them after beating Schalke 04 in the UEFA Cup.

RWDM are a noticeable example of a big team with an artificial soul. The team, as we know it now, is the result of so many fusions over the past few years that even local fans are confused.

In 1963 the two teams of Racing Brussels and White Star amalgamated to form Racing White. Ten years later this team merged with the Brussels club Daring Molenbeek and moved to the Edmond Machtensstadion in the Brussels suburb of Molenbeek.

The "new" club won the Belgian championship in 1975 but did not do very well last season and there were many changes. The coach Felix Week — a former Belgian international — was replaced by Piet de Visser from Holland.

RWDM also signed two new players: Olson, a Danish international from Cercle Bruges and the Belgian Cordiez. What has happened? The team is doing well in the league, but was eliminated from the Cup by Beringen.

Yet RWDM are the least popular of the top Belgian teams, probably due to the fact that they play rather defensively. They do not have a top player like Renseenbrink (Anderlecht) or Lambert (Bruges).

Big bonuses in Turkey

THE NEW Turkish Football Federation has announced that if Turkey qualify for the 1978 World Cup finals each player will receive a bonus of £3,300.

After the unexpected resignation of members of the old Federation, the newcomers were lucky to come to power at the time Turkey attained a valuable 1-1 draw away to East Germany.

But were Turkey lucky to get a draw? Manager Dogan Andac says: "Everybody seems to think so. But I don't. We took a valuable point in an away game from a strong side. What I am most afraid of are the home games. We find it difficult to score on our ground. The Malta match was an exception.

"The fact is that after we gain points from strong sides we get a superiority complex. But Dresden proved to me that if we play to our strengths we would be able to beat the Olympic champions and Austria in Turkey."

Asked how he began his programme of preparation Andac replied: I am most anxious to prepare my players psychologically as well as physically and tactically. I selected my team mostly from Trabzonspor, who have done well for the past two years. Ali Kemal, Turgay Necati and Bekir are the most consistent players in the league at the moment.

In 13 league matches Kemal (7) and Necmi scored all their team's 18 goals. Gokmen of Galatasaray (7) and Cemil (5) of Fenerbahce complete the forward line. These are the men who provide the national squad with moral strength. Each of them is a potential match winner. We are trying to play attractive football as well as aiming to win. This is what Malcolm Allison is trying to do with Galatasaray."

The appointment of Allison has caused problems at Galatasaray. The administration manager of the club, Mr Turgan Ece, told the Turkish press recently that Allison made his fame not with his superior football but with his Adonis appearance.

Appointment

Mr Ece has always been against the appointment of Malcolm Allison. He said: "Mr Allison has proved nothing in Turkey, otherwise his team (Galatasaray) would be top of the league. If he was successful why did he not stay with Crystal Palace."

Mr Allison answered Turgan Ece in an interview with the leading Turkish newspaper Milliyet. He said: "The truth is that to be a manager you have to start from the beginning as a student. It is always like this in Europe. First you become a player. Then a trainer and finally a manager. But what has he (Ece) done? Nothing. Has he ever properly trained a team in his life? No. He hasn't even proved himself as a player. Despite all these criticisms of me I do not mind him because he hasn't got the slightest idea about football."

season in Romania and before each match.

At club level there was little success in the various European club tournaments. For the fourth successive year no Romanian club has reached the quarter finals. This year only one of the five competing clubs managed to get as far as the second round. This "honour" went to Sportul Studentesc, the students' team from Bucharest, managed by former national coach A. Niculescu.

The continued failures of the Romanian clubs and the national teams has caused the Press here to mount a campaign of criticism. Poor performances against Yugoslavia and Spain could mean the end of the road for Kovacs.

For 20 years the Romanian championship has traditionally been a battle between Dynamo and Steaua. Only Petrolul Ploesti, UT Arad, Rapid and University Craiova have broken the spell.

This season Dynamo lead after 17 matches, and went through a 10 match unbeaten period. Dudu is their leading scorer, with 22 goals having twice scored four goals in a match plus a hat-trick. He has much improved his technique and has now scored 107 league goals in three and a half seasons with Dynamo.

SANON RETURNS

EMMANUEL SANON of Haiti, who signed for Beerschot after playing in the 1974 World Cup finals, has been at the centre of a club versus country conflict. After taking time to settle down, Sanon became known as the "Black Pearl" of the Beerschot team.

Recently he returned to Haiti to play for his country against Cuba in the World Cup qualifying round matches. After the first two matches — both drawn — Sanon returned to Belgium to play for Beerschot but was then recalled by Haiti for the decider.

Beerschot vetoed his return, but Sanon secretly left Belgium and helped Haiti beat Cuba 2-0. Beerschot do not plan to discipline Sanon but are unhappy with the Haiti Federation, especially as they face another round of World Cup matches.

WORLD SOCCER Newsdesk

ISRAEL GET READY

ISRAEL has been busy making final preparations for their first World Cup qualification match against South Korea at the National Stadium in Pamat Gan on February 27.

This will be the first Group II game in Asia. Japan are the third country in the group. North Korea have withdrawn because they refuse to play against Israel for political reasons.

Build-up

In the last month Israel have played three matches as part of their World Cup build up. They lost 1-3 to Austria, 0-1 to the West German Olympic team and beat Bayern Munich 2-0. After the first two games the national coach, David Schwitzer, realised that he had a lot of problems on his hands.

Schwitzer had still to find the right team and made many experiments without much success. But after the surprising victory over Bayern he was more optimistic about Israel's chances. Bayern played without Sepp Maier and Gerd Muller but included Franz Beckenbauer, who was far from his best.

Release

Viki Peretz and Gidon Damti scored the Israel goals. One player missing from the Israeli line-up was Giora Spigal (28) who is playing in France with Lyon. Israel hope that he will be released for their World Cup games.

Spigal is the third Israeli player to make a name for himself in European football. Samuel Rosental played for Borussia Monchengladbach and Modechai Spigler played for Paris St. Germain and is the most capped Israeli player, with over 70 appearances.

Spigler almost signed for West Ham United seven years ago, but because of the Football League regulations in England he was unable to do so. He was the star of the Israeli team in the 1970 World Cup finals in Mexico and is still playing midfield for his country.

Brian Glanville asks

TOO MANY LOANS?

TOO MANY loans spoil . . . the League. This season, it seems to me, they have been proliferating with unhealthy speed. Let me take two, at a venture. Peter Osgood went on loan for a month or so from Southampton to Norwich City, played a few First Division games for Norwich with varying success; then went back again to The Dell. Teddy Maybank, the young, blond Chelsea centre-forward, was lent to Fulham, did well, scored a couple of goals in one particular home game televised . . . and was speedily recalled to Stamford Bridge.

Loans like these seem to me seriously to falsify and threaten the League system; this though loans are in themselves nothing new. I can remember, in the late 1940s, Doug Lishman and Dennis Wilshaw forming a splendidly effective wing in the Third Division for Walsall. Arsenal bought Lishman, who went on to do great things for them; but they couldn't buy Wilshaw, although it was rumoured that they might. The reason was simple; Wilshaw was a Wolves player and back he went to Molineux, to become in turn a centre forward and an inside-left, and to play many games for England.

I have no objection, either, to the kind of loan constituted by John Tudor's passage to Stoke City from Newcastle, which speedily concluded with a transfer deal. I suppose you can say that loans such as these constitute a kind of trial marriage, a ceding of a player on approval; and perhaps that was also the intention in the case of Osgood.

Yet intention, however good, is scarcely a sufficient extenuation. When a player suddenly and briefly joins another club, perhaps scores, or prevents, vital goals for that club, then is suddenly whisked away back to his original team, it seems to me that damage has been done both to natural justice and to the spirit of the whole League.

Television interview

Eddie McCreadie, Chelsea's manager, was very firm in announcing, right after Maybank had scored his goals and given his interview on television that he had no intention of letting him stay at Craven Cottage. In that case I really do not think he should have been allowed to go there at all, though I can quite see the value of the deal to Chelsea as well as Fulham. They were thus able to give young Maybank League experience at a time when there was no League place for him at Stamford Bridge, and perhaps to rejuvenate a player who had been going through a bleak spell of form.

But if loans are to be permitted, they must surely be of longer duration, otherwise we totter on the very brink of farce. I myself strongly believe that once a player has been lent, he should not be allowed to return to his original club until the end of the current season; or, if he does return, then he should not be allowed to play in the League for that campaign.

Loans in Italy are of course a commonplace; but they always function on a full seasonal basis.

Lower divisions

Not that I have any wish to defend the system there, which has frequently been criticised by the country's own experts. It enables the major clubs such as Juventus, Inter Milan to tie up a plethora of the best young talent in the country, farming it out to other clubs, usually though not always in the lower divisions, then taking it back at the end of any given season should it feel like it. Among the many players to be put out on loan in this way was Roberto Bettega, scorer of that famous second goal against England, who played a while for Varese, before returning to Juventus.

Broadening the discourse a little, the most conspicuous instance of player loans which we have at the moment is that indulged in by the North American Soccer League, which might, if one were feeling sufficiently cruel, be described as a mere parasite on the Football League. That the native breed of footballer is still pathetically inadequate was re-emphasised when in December the American international team was knocked out of the World Cup 3-0 in a play-off by . . . Canada.

These loans, of course, come into a very different category; they run from April 29 to the end of the American season in late August or so; and the NASL, for all its trumpetings and self-advertisement, would simply be impossible without them. They are sometimes beyond doubt helpful to the players and the clubs involved, if not monetarily then, more rewardingly still, in terms of experience. Gordon Hill, for example, certainly felt that he benefited, when a Millwall player, from the summer he spent playing in Chicago.

I see with some dismay that the NASL, who seem to be modelling their Championship increasingly on the Gunfight at the OK Corral, have decided on another crack brained method of deciding drawn games; as if, for Heaven's sake, they *need* deciding. It appears that the kicker and the goalkeeper will now charge at each other from a distance of thirty-five yards; it has been calculated that 40 per cent of such attemps will be successful. Who the devil cares?

When, oh when, will the NASL stop monkeying about the laws of the game? Already they play with a thirty-five yard offside area, instead of half the length of the field; which puts them out of step with the whole of the rest of the world. Prostituting a game to an uninstructed, ignorant public is hardly, in the long run, the way to promote it.

We have been told by one critic here that we must beware of great depredations among our own players by the NASL. One day, perhaps, but hardly yet. Certainly the NASL can at times offer huge sums of money, as the New York Cosmos did to an ageing Pele; but it is still a backwater, is likely to remain one for many years, and offers little in "job satisfaction" to the likes of Giorgio Chinaglia, still in the prime of his career. Interviews Chinaglia has recently given to visiting Italian journalists suggest that he is whistling desperately to keep his spirits up.

Wealthy company

It is unquestionably true that Warner Communications are an enormously wealthy company, that they own the New York Cosmos, and that they make most similar European organizations — though not perhaps Annelli's FIAT, which stands behind Juventus — look small beer. But by the same token, I cannot believe that Warner would even feel the draught were they one day to decide that the Cosmos were not worth losing money for.

The level of the NASL is generally low, major players who go there will for the foreseeable future be large fish in a little pool, all but in the geographic sense; though the rewards may indeed be spectacular. I retain my belief that American soccer will never be of any consequence until the Negro population is deeply involved. Then America will produce its own players in abundance, just as it has done in so many other sports, and it will not need to be carried by our own far from exceptional or impressive game.

In the meanwhile, it would show a fitting modesty and a proper sense of proportion were the NASL to play the game by its proper rules. This perennial addiction to the gimmick merely succeeds in breeding mistrust in Europe and South America; a fear that if the Americans did ever really manage to get their hands on the game, they would cheapen and distort it in all kinds of ways, in the hope of "selling" it to a public with apparently negligible attention span, incapable of appreciating anything but the scoring of points and goals.

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Bukta sportwear — Outstrip them in the changing room and outstrip them on the field.

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This is No. 1 of a series of illustrations

STOCKPORT, ENGLAND

FRANZ WINS AGAIN

by Keir Radnedge

European Footballer of the Year Franz Beckenbauer.

FOR A man who once said the only driving force is money, Franz Beckenbauer has done plenty to prove himself wrong.

As an international since 1965 — when he made his debut in a vital World Cup qualifier — he's long since assured a wealthy and comfortable future for himself, his wife Brigitte and their three sons.

Yet something drives him on. Early last year he told a colleague that he had three immediate ambitions: to win the Champions' Cup again, to win the European Championship once more, and become European footballer of the year for a second time.

Bayern took the Champions' Cup for the third time in a row, West Germany missed the European title only on penalties, and now Beckenbauer has indeed been hailed as Europe's No 1 again.

Along the way he also collected his 100th cap — in that unlucky final against Czechoslovakia — and led Bayern to the world club cup.

It can't be money which drives him now. His family live in a sumptuous villa on the outskirts of Munich and his business and advertising contracts arranged with the help of his agent, Bayern's general manager Robert Schwan, keep perhaps more than a quarter of a million pounds coming in each year. So what's the secret for the man who first won the European player accolade in 1972, has been second twice and third once?

A simple one, but which too few professionals retain throughout their careers — Beckenbauer enjoys his football. And he's also grown used to being a winner to fancy the taste of defeat.

Mind you, talent such as his must make football more enjoyable. That majestic sweep past last-ditch tackles — the style which earned the nickname 'Kaiser Franz'. The wonderful knack of scoring important goals. Remember the one which stunned England in Mexico in the 1970 World Cup quarter finals?

Franz Anton Beckenbauer, born in Munich on September 11, 1945, was born a winner. As a schoolboy centre forward he once scored 100 goals in a season. He played for West Germany schoolboys, then for the youth team soon after he joined Bayern at 17.

The funny thing is that Beckenbauer had always been an avid fan of the other Munich team, TSV 1860. But in an early youth club match against 1860, he was badly and painfully fouled. That decided him on joining the rivals and, as we've seen, Beckenbauer generally gets what he wants.

For example . . . the West German youth manager in Beckenbauer's early days was Dettmar Cramer, the dapper little man who later became FIFA coach. When Bayern sacked Udo Lattek two years ago Beckenbauer told the board: "I want Cramer appointed."

The fact that Cramer held a lucrative post with the United States soccer federation hardly mattered. Beckenbauer wanted him for Bayern and Beckenbauer got his way.

Another example . . . during the last World Cup, surely the crowning point of even this great player's career, Beckenbauer was unhappy with West Germany's early performances. He persuaded manager Helmut Schoen to make a series of shock changes — including the exclusion for one game of even Bayern colleague Uli Hoeness. The rest of the squad were so shaken they got down to the job in hand and even that first-minute penalty in the final couldn't prevent them winning the World Cup.

EUROPEAN FOOTBALLERS OF THE YEAR 1976

		votes
1.	Franz Beckenbauer (Bayern/W. Germany)	91
2.	Rob Rensenbrink (Anderlecht/Holland)	75
3.	Ivo Viktor (Dukla/Czechoslovakia)	52
4.	Kevin Keegan (Liverpool/England)	32
5.	Michel Platini (Nancy-Lorraine/France)	10
6.	Anton Ondrus (Slovan/Czechoslovakia)	18
7.	Johan Cruyff (Barcelona/Holland)	12
	Yvan Curkovic (St-Etienne/Yugoslavia)	
9.	Rainer Bonhof (Borussia Mg/W. Germany)	9
	Marian Masny (Slovan/Czechoslovakia)	
	Gerd Müller (Bayern/W. Germany)	
12.	Franco Causio (Juventus/Italy)	7
13.	Berti Vogts (Borussia Mg/W. Germany)	6
14.	Tibor Nyilasi (Ferencvaros/Hungary)	5
15.	Roberto Bettega (Juventus/Italy)	4
	Jürgen Croy (Zwickau/E. Germany)	
	Dud Georgescu (Din. Bucharest/Rumania)	
	'Bobby' Pollak (Kosice/Czechoslovakia)	
19.	Oleg Blokhin (Kiev/Russia)	3
	Joachim Streich (Magdeburg/E. Germany)	
21.	Gerard Janvion (St-Etienne/France)	2
	Dieter Müller (Köln/W. Germany)	
	Dominique Rocheteau (St-Etienne/France)	
	Carlos Santillana (Real Madrid/Spain)	
	Benny Wendt (Ten. Borussia Berlin/Sweden)	
26.	Ali Cemal (Trabzonspor/Turkey)	1
	Jupp Heynckes (Borussia Mg/W. Germany)	
	Dominique Bathenay (St-Etienne/France)	
	Dino Zoff (Juventus/Italy)	

Beckenbauer has become a one-man football revolution. He's the sweeper who combines that role with being a midfield general, commander and occasional goal-scorer. He's had his luck — you may recall that penalty Leeds claimed in 1975 in Paris when Beckenbauer tangled with Allan Clarke. But all great players need luck and, more than most, Beckenbauer deserves the luck he gets.

Now, with 102 international caps to his name, he seems well placed to go on to a world record, beating Bobby Moore's 108. And that will be one more milestone for the man who has won the World Cup, the European Championship, the world club cup, the Champions' Cup three times, the Cup-winners' Cup, the West German championship four times, the Cup twice and been named West German player of the year four times.

Formidable

There seem few signs of that formidable talent fading. Against Real Madrid in last season's Champions' Cup semi-final leg Beckenbauer played in Madrid what many West Germans who have watched his every step called one of his greatest games.

Not content just to defend — even before that 125,000 crowd. He kept coming forward and it was Beckenbauer who had a major role to play in setting up the Gerd Müller goal which made Bayern's task in the second leg that much easier.

He's made his fortune and for many players that would be enough. They'd ease up or retire. But for Kaiser Franz that won't do. He's in a class of his own. The *France Football* awards show that.

Fourteen of the 26 voting journalists placed him top, with six going for Rob Rensenbrink, four for Ivo Viktor, and one each for Michel Platini, the new French star, and remarkably Hungary's Tibor Nyilasi (that was the Luxembourg vote).

In the final analysis Beckenbauer finished 16 points ahead of Rensenbrink after each journalist's five votes had been taken into account, with Viktor third, Kevin Keegan fourth and Platini fifth.

ALL THE AWARDS

1956 — Stanley Matthews	2 — Alfredo di Stefano	3 — Raymond Kopa
1957 — Di Stefano	2 — Billy Wright	3 — Kopa
1958 — Kopa	2 — Helmut Rahn	3 — Juste Fontaine
1959 — Di Stefano	2 — Kopa	3 — John Charles
1960 — Luis Suarez	2 — Ferenc Puskas	3— Uwe Seeler
1961 — Omar Sivori	2 — Suarez	3 — Johnny Haynes
1962 — Josef Masopust	2 — Silva Eusebio	3 — K-H. Schnellinger
1963 — Lev Yashin	2 — Gianni Rivera	3 — Jimmy Greaves
1964 — Denis Law	2 — Suarez	3 — Amancio Amaro
1965 — Eusebio	2 — Giacinto Facchetti	3 — Suarez
1966 — Bobby Charlton	2 — Eusebio	3 — Franz Beckenbauer
1967 — Florian Albert	2 — B. Charlton	3 — Jimmy Johnstone
1968 — George Best	2 — B. Charlton	3 — Dragan Dzajic
1969 — Rivera	2 — Luigi Riva	3 — Gerd Müller
1970 — Müller	2 — Bobby Moore	3 — Riva
1971 — Johan Cruyff	2 — Sandro Mazzola	3 — Best
1972 — Beckenbauer	2 — Müller	3 — Günter Netzer
1973 — Cruyff	2 — Dino Zoff	3 — Müller
1974 — Cruyff	2 — Beckenbauer	3 — Kazimierz Deyna
1975 — Oleg Blokhin	2 — Beckenbauer	3 — Cruyff
1976 — Beckenbauer	2 — Rob Rensenbrink	3 — Ivo Viktor

Kevin Keegan — number four in Europe.

To me the poll generally seemed to reach fairly reasonable conclusions. Over the past year Beckenbauer has been out on his own, though had I been voting I would have placed Viktor above Rensenbrink. He's been around far longer, and probably achieved more for club and country. On the other hand, forwards generally are more popular in such polls, and in 20 years of the *France Football* award, the only other goalkeepers to make the top three were Lev Yashin (top in 1963) and Dino Zoff (second in 1973).

Keegan's appearance in fourth place is more a tribute to the efficiency of the Liverpool machine than a personal vote. After all, Keegan's form with England couldn't have done much for his reputation.

The appearance of Platini in fifth spot — the first Frenchman to do as well since Raymond Kopa and Juste Fontaine — was also a surprise. He's done well in his first 12 months as an international, but hardly made a major all-round impact.

Still, the problem in wondering about the high ratings of Keegan and Platini is who would rate above them? Given that the first three are in a class of their own, *all* the rest are also-rans.

I've a tremendous regard still for Gerd Müller (ninth equal for *France Football*) and I was surprised to see no votes for Oswaldo Piazza, one of the mainstays of Saint-Etienne's Champions' Cup run.

And though neither man could claim any achievement at national team level neither could Yvan Curkovic, the Saint-Etienne goalkeeper who finished equal seventh alongside three-times winner Johan Cruyff.

Still, the minor placings don't mean that much. And at least no-one could quibble with the choice of Beckenbauer as top of the European pops!

EUROPEAN NATIONAL TEAM RANKINGS 1976

1. West Germany (4th last year)
2. Czechoslovakia (1st)
3. East Germany
   Holland
   Hungary
6. Scotland
7. Republic of Ireland
   France
   Italy
10. Russia
11. Poland
12. England
13. Denmark
14. Spain
15. Portugal
16. Austria
    Belgium
18. Sweden
19. Bulgaria
20. Rumania
    Turkey
22. Finland
    Yugoslavia
24. N. Ireland
25. Switzerland
26. Iceland
    Norway
28. Greece
29. Wales
30. Malta
31. Cyprus
    Luxembourg

Unplaced: Albania (too few games)

ARTHUR ROTMIL reveals the huge

WORLD CREAM O

ENGLAND'S NATIONAL team so severely criticised for some inept displays, will have a good chance to redeem itself when entertaining Holland in a friendly at Wembley on February 9. A win over the World Cup runners-up could restore the morale of the side who after the 0-2 defeat against Italy seem on the verge of failure to qualify for the world series in Argentina.

On the other hand, one must hope that a success against the Dutch will not create a false sense of self-satisfaction or exaggerated euphoria. For the Dutch are today far, far removed from the form which took them into the World Cup final in 1974. They have already dropped a valuable home point in that 2-2 draw with Northern Ireland in their group and may also fail to reach the next world finals.

The temporary manager Jan Zwartkruis (51) has now quit his post and so the Dutch — quite apart from some undignified internal squabbling between the Unions of the Professional Players, the Managers and the Referees Association on one side and the KNVB (Football Federation) on the other — are now left without a national team manager!

Some of the World Cup stars like Cruyff, Neeskens, Haan, Rep and Rensenbrink who are active abroad, may not even be released to play against England. Others, like goalkeeper Jongbloed and schemer Van Hanegem are too old, whilst defender Suurbier, in dispute with his club Ajax, hasn't played recently.

Of course, the Dutch who since the introduction of professional football in 1954 have made tremendous strides can still put out a reasonably strong side — but who is going to manage it? They have not beaten England in five meetings and although England have no settled team either, it would be too much to expect of the Dutch for them to win at Wembley.

Holland were not the best team in the World Cup — I rated them behind West Germany and Poland. But the Dutch players proved themselves champions at cashing in on their success, first when qualifying for the world series and then in reaching the Final. No other side competing in the World Cup in 1974 can claim to have made such a financial "Killing" as the men in the orange shirts of the Netherlands.

Out of the total net receipts collected by their Football Federation, the national squad comprising 22 players pocketed a cool 70 per cent!

The idea of win bonuses paid to national representatives is relatively new. Even in countries where professional football is well organised, like West Germany and Italy, their stars were, until the 1966 World Cup at the latest, expected to play for "the honour and glory of representing the nation". England's internationals used to receive just a match fee, until the F.A. generously distributed £1,000 per man for winning the World Cup. But times have changed.

The Germans cashed in for finishing third in the 1970 series in Mexico to the tune of £3,300 a head. For winning the European Championship (1972), the German F.A. rewarded their men with £1,600 each. The real pay-off came in the 1974 World Cup, but only after prolonged and often embarrassing negotiations between the players and the F.A. officials.

Every member of the squad collected a total of £17,400 made up of a £10,000 outright win bonus, £833 per match played (seven games netting £5,800), plus ex-gratia payment for using the "Adidas" boots and other equipment under the patronage of the DFB (F.A.) amounting to £1,600 per man. And this is not counting the various emoluments from lucrative commercial contracts.

Italian players were promised some £20,000 each in the event of winning the World Cup; the Brazilians, who for their World Cup victory in 1970 were paid 60,000 dollars per man (from all sources), could have earned a similar amount, had they succeeded in Germany.

Addition

The English players were offered a bonus of £5,000 a man to win the European Championship and are now being promised the same reward if they qualify for the World Cup '78. This in addition to match bonuses of £200 for a win, or £100 for a draw, plus the usual £100 appearance fee. Of course, no pressure was put on the F.A. to obtain these improved financial incentives. What has happened in Holland, however, has no parallel in international football.

Out of gross takings amounting to £533,000 the KNVB were left with a net profit of just £6,750. At the same time, the 22 World Cup players were allowed to share £236,000! And this after they were already paid £110,000 for qualifying for the final series. This means that the Dutch stars collected more money from their Federation than the victorious West Germans, who as host nation did not have to qualify.

It became obvious, already back in 1972, that the Dutch knew how to squeeze the most out of their governing body. For Holland were drawn in their World Cup preliminary group with Norway and Iceland whose visits did not bring in full houses, as only their rivals, neighbouring Belgium, could be rated attractive opposition. The players united and confident of their power, insisted on the 70 per cent rake-off, although they knew that the

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bonuses paid to Holland's players

CUP SQUAD
FF REVENUE

Johan Cruyff (right) of Holland . . . It was a lucrative World Cup for him.

clubs in turn will also want their share of the spoils.

A detailed study of the balance sheet, which incidentally was not intended for publication, but was probably "leaked" by a Federation official, reveals some interesting facets of upper class football's financial machinations. There are, for example, large sums paid out to star players like Johan Cruyff, Piet Keizer and Wim Van Hanegem, to "redeem" their earlier signed private sponsorship contracts!

The First Division club AZ'67 Alkmaar, received over £8,000 compensation for the release from contract of their coach Cor Van der Hart, so he could become the assistant to national manager Rinus Michels. The Dutch squad's stay in West Germany cost £60,000 — an enormous sum towards which the F.A. recouped some £16,000 from the World Cup Organizing Committee.

Team chief Rinus Michels, already then in charge of CF Barcelona, who was appointed as "supervisor" to the squad only shortly before and just for the duration of the world series, was paid a staggering £33,300 in which the travelling costs of his five lightning visits to Barcelona were included.

Business

But other outgoings, too, deserve to be mentioned to demonstrate what a big business football, especially at the level of a world championship has become:

On insurance cover for the players the Football Federation forked out £28,000; medical welfare cost over £10,000; telephone, telegrams and telex expenses swallowed £6,000; on publicity material, like brochures, photos etc., over £8,000 was spent, and on gifts about £4,700.

And it must be remembered that the travelling costs because of the proximity of venues were comparatively small. But the most surprising fact to emerge from this summary is the meek submission of the Royal Netherlands Football Federation (KNBV) to this form of blackmail by its players.

Yet, this body which has to find funds for such ventures as the organisation and development of youth football, coaching schemes, training centres etc., should have cashed in on such a rate money spinning event as the World Cup. But instead, it was the already highly paid stars who had scooped the jackpot.

A more blatant example of the misuse of "player-power" has yet to be seen. And the advent of the freedom of contract will next expose the clubs to the ransom.

The division of profits accrued from the 1974 World Cup, produced in Holland the following figures:

Distributed to the playing staff (22 men)	— 70 per cent =	£236,000
For those clubs which provided players	— 24 per cent =	£80,000
To other professional clubs	— 2 per cent =	£6,750
To the Players' Union	— 2 per cent =	£6,750
To the KNVB (Football Federation)	— 2 per cent =	£6,750

Referees differ over conditions

THE ENGLISH season has recently been subjected to a spate of very cold weather which has caused a great many games to be postponed. On the other hand many games have been played in atrocious conditions, making the game a lottery rather than a matter of skill, and it is clear that the Football League should act (better late than never) to produce some level of consistency from referees when inspecting suspect pitches.

Report by ERIC BATTY

With travel and hotel costs so high these days, and many clubs in financial difficulties, it is also important to save teams from travelling unnecessarily wherever possible, and this means that decisions have to be taken early.

In many cases, because teams travelling more than roughly 100 miles to an away game, take the precaution to travel the day before the game, this means that decisions must often be made the day before the match. BUT THEY ARE NOT.

It is clearly in the interests of all clubs to press the League at their Annual General Meeting that doubtful pitches should be inspected early on the day before a match. However, I doubt if enough clubs will do so. There is a curious situation at the Football League. The clubs are in fact the masters of the Football League officials, but unfortunately, they have, over the last few years at least, allowed their senior officials to rule over them. This is a situation that needs to be reversed. Football League officials should serve the clubs.

The first thing that needs to be done is to send out a directive with regard to what is, and what is not, a playable pitch. At the moment, one referee would pass a pitch fit for play, while many others would call it off without a second thought.

Talking to League club managers on this point reveals some interesting points. One manager told me: "The referee walked out to the edge of an icy pitch and said . . . 'as far as I am concerned it is off now. But let us walk all over the pitch to make it look right'."

Another referee had a look at 'his' pitch and told the club manager: "It is up to you to decide whether you want to play or not."

In the absence of a general directive from the Football League, the referees' opinions are clearly going to differ widely. But the referees must also bear in mind a directive that has been issued by the League to the effect that "games must be played wherever possible".

This clearly influences many officials who would otherwise call games off and the League's interest appears to be not that of the fans who keep the game alive, not the safety of the players or the clubs' interests, but merely to avoid a back-log of fixtures.

The recent bad weather proved that no matter what precautions a club may take there is no defence against a really bad frost or a heavy snow fall. Both Arsenal (with under soil heating) and Leicester City (with a plastic balloon over their pitch and hot air pumped under the balloon), had matches called off on their grounds.

I have seen several games that in my view should never have been played. Pitches on which it was impossible to play real football . . . which is passing to feet, and passing along the ground . . . because the ball did unpredictable things and bobbled about on the ice. On other pitches, one in particular, it was clear that the players were in serious difficulty staying on their feet, let alone playing good football.

Two basic points are at issue. The first being that as long as English players are expected to play in thick mud and water, and ice or snow bound pitches more suitable for ice-hockey, we are less likely to develop the skilful players that England performances prove conclusively we need very badly.

The second is my personal philosophy. In my view, football is to be enjoyed. To be enjoyed by all taking part, and that includes the fans.

In my younger days I stood on frozen terraces, covered in ice or snow that were very dangerous indeed. Does any referee inspect the terraces and pass them fit?

Finally, how many fans really enjoy watching a game in which the players slip if they try to turn quickly, and make errors when playing the ball because they cannot keep their balance?

Before deciding whether a pitch is playable or not, the referee should have three vital points in his mind:

1. will it be possible to play *real football* on this pitch?

2. will the players enjoy playing under the conditions?

3. will the spectators enjoy watching a game on this pitch?

If the answer to ANY ONE of these questions is no, then the referee should declare the game off . . . and to hell with the Football League.

UPSET FOR ITALY

ITALY'S WORLD Cup path is never straightforward. Barely had we learned of a "plot" which upset the *squadra* on the eve of the 1974 finals, than the *Azzurri* were losing 2-1 in a friendly with Portugal.

The plot was blown open by Giorgio Chinaglia, who alleged that on the eve of Italy's match with Haiti a meeting of 19 players (minus Gianni Rivera, Sandro Mazzola and skipper Giacinto Facchetti) decided to tell manager Ferruccio Valcareggi to drop Rivera and Mazzola.

Chinaglia claims he was elected spokesman, but that after he put the demand to Valcareggi, the other players developed cold feet and refused to back him up. This is why, Chinaglia presumably thinks, he was substituted in both games against Haiti and Poland and didn't play against Argentina. Rivera and Mazzola played against Haiti and Argentina and Mazzola also played against Poland. Indeed he was — with the exception of Dino Zoff — Italy's best player.

Apparently the ground for the players' protest was the poor form of Rivera and Mazzola in the last World Cup warm-up, a 0-0 draw with Austria. Knowing all this, it's hardly surprising Italy failed to reach the second round. England manager Don Revie can reflect that where the opponents are Italian there is always hope.

The 2,000 fans produced precious little atmosphere and heavy and continuous rain didn't encourage the Italians to take many risks at a time when they would have preferred to be starting their Christmas holiday.

Portugal: Bento — Barros, Laranjeira, Mendes, Tai — Octavio, Humberto, Alves-Albertino (Toni), Nene, Chalana (Francisco Maria).

Italy: Zoff — Scirea — Cuccureddu (Danova), Gentile, Tardelli — Benetti, Capello (Zaccarelli). Antognoni — Causio, Graziani, Bettega.

The Italians showed only one change — Gaetano Scirea for Facchetti — from the team who beat England and they paid for the lack of aerial power as early as the 16th minute when an Octavio corner wasn't cleared and Nene rammed the ball past Zoff.

Nene also scored the second, quarter of an hour from time after some sweet play by Joao Alves, and it was only then that the Italians started to shake themselves.

The result was a goal for Roberto Bettega, though Spanish referee Emilio Guruceta ignored what seemed justified Portuguese appeals for it may be the last time Portugal's fans see Humberto Coelho for some time. Paris Saint-Germain, having recently turned down an offer from Feyenoord, have sold him instead to Brazil's Internacional Porto Alegre, where he will succeed the homeward-bound Chilean, Elias Figueroa.

PAUL GARDNER reports from New York

New style deciders for NASL

WHEN THE club owners of the North American Soccer League met in Chicago, one of the most important items on their agenda read: "Alternatives to the penalty kick tie-breaker."

Well, you only need alternatives when you're not satisfied with what you've got. The NASL owners, completely sold on the idea that there should be *some* form of tie-breaker, found the traditional penalty kicks altogether too static. Just not exciting enough, not dramatic enough. "Hell, the goalkeeper's a sitting duck, there's no suspense to the thing," said one owner to me, his tone clearly expressing his contempt.

His opinion was widely shared; hence the search for alternatives, more exciting methods of deciding a game. The answer has come from the sport of ice hockey, in which the penalty shot allows the shooter to skate in on the goalie, and allows the keeper to move.

That is the new idea for soccer. The shooter will start with the ball at his feet on the 35 yard line (that's the NASL's own off-side line). At a signal, he dribbles towards the goal, while the keeper comes out to play the angles. And to prevent a protracted cat-and-mouse duel between the two, there will be a time limit of five seconds. If the player taking the shot hasn't hit the ball before the limit is up, he has failed to score.

Ludicrous? Gimmicky? Making a travesty of the sport? I'm not so sure. I have to admit that the penalty kick tie-breakers that I have been watching over the past three seasons have been lacking in climatic tension. They were, no question about it, flat, dull ways of deciding what were often very exciting games.

What the NASL is trying to do with the new shoot-out (sorry about that, but that is the name that the NASL seems determined to adopt) is to give the fans more movement and more suspense.

Efforts

Will it work? Things are beyond the theory stage. Players from the Washington Diplomats have tried the new system, and it was films of their efforts that helped the owners to decide in favour. Johnny Kerr, one the players involved, found he was doing quite well with the shots, but wondered whether it would be the same when the crowd and the noise and the pressure were there: "When they put us on a $1-a-goal bonus, then we started forcing it and missing. We were shooting wide more than the goalkeeper was saving. And five seconds turned out to be much longer than anyone had realised."

Long enough, as it turned out, for there to be contact between the 'keeper and the shooter, something that could pose problems. "What do you do if the 'keeper tackles the shooter?" asks Kerr, "give a penalty?"

The NASL is now working out detailed rules for the procedure, but overall they will retain the structure of the more conventional penalty kicks — i.e. five kicks for each side, then a sudden-death situation. The league is also satisfied that five seconds is the correct time limit and that contact will not be a problem. They point out that the shoot-out gives the goalkeeper much more chance; indeed in the experiments so far conducted, the scoring rate has been about 4 out of 10. (Asked if this meant that the NASL was in favour of reducing goal-scoring, an NASL spokesman produced only a strangled cry in response.)

One of the men largely responsible for the introduction of the shoot-out is John Carbray, GM of the Washington Diplomats. A word of introduction for Mr Carbray; last year he was with the San Jose Earthquakes, where his fertile mind produced what, for me, takes second place only to women's soccer, as the ultimate in soccer obscenities: the multi-coloured soccer field.

On to your basic green, Mr Carbray superimposed a huge drawing of a soccer ball (it might have been a barrage balloon, but a soccer ball seems more likely), thereby effectively obliterating the centre-circle, and the two penalty areas were painted a most unattractive shade of red.

"Very good for the fans who didn't know the game," insists Carbray, "they found following the rules much easier. And another thing, our coach found it helpful. He could tell the forwards 'When you see red grass, shoot!' and the defenders were told to 'back up until you hit the red — that's far enough.'" (Conservationists please note: I have Mr Carbray's word for it that the grass is not damaged by all this application of paint.)

Passing over all that, let us listen to Carbray on the subject of the shoot-out: "It's a super-exciting thing, we've seen some tremendous plays. The players like it, they're using the skills they use in a game. And I can see terrific fan involvement. Imagine a crowd of 20,000 counting down those five seconds!" I find all of that infinitely more impressive than scarlet penalty areas, and am not prepared to argue with one word of it until I have seen the shoot-out in action.

Respect

There remains the distinct possibility that a heavily jaundiced eye will be cast on the whole rigmarole by FIFA. Does that worry anyone? "I'm not too concerned" says John Carbray. It has to be admitted that people in the NASL do not always talk of FIFA in tones of deferential respect.

Another item on the owners' agenda was the annual game of musical chairs that is played with the club locations. At the time of writing, the latest changes look like this. The San Diego Jaws (who used to be the Baltimore Comets) will be shifted to that glittering gambling capital of the world, Las Vegas, where they will be known as the Las Vegas Quicksilvers.

The San Antonio Thunder, having failed to make much impression on the Texans are off to try their charms in the Pacific, Hawaii to be precise, where they will be known as Team Hawaii. The Philadelphia Atoms are moving away from that city, and will replace the Thunder in San Antonio. The Boston Minutemen are in a state of legally imposed suspension because of the financial problems of their owner. So the NASL will operate in 1977 with a league of 19 teams.

There is one application for a new franchise awaiting approval by the league, from a group in Denver. If approved, the team would start in 1978, and would be the first NASL franchise to cough up $1 million for the privilege of operating.

Well, that's not quite true. The asking price for an NASL franchise is now set at $1 million, but only $250,000 of that has to be paid in cash. The rest is simply a matter of the new franchise waiving its right to its share of money that might be generated by the league — e.g. from television or from the marketing division. As the revenue from these areas has been virtually nil in the past few years, the new franchise is not really giving up very much.

I have referred above (facetiously, of course) to the way that the NASL's new shoot-out will cut down goal production. Not nearly so funny is the contribution of the US National Team to this topic. They have recently set what is surely a world record for national teams (at least, let us desperately *hope* that it is a world record) by playing five (yes, that is *five*) consecutive 0-0 ties. In their last seven games they have scored just one goal.

The LESLIE VERNON interview

Chelsea's future appears bright

FIFTY FIVE thousand people at a Second Division match might not be a world record, but it certainly is an astonishing gate figure in these days of economic stress, not to mention the often publicized public disenchantment with football. Yet, the doors were closed long before kick-off time at Stamford Bridge when Chelsea met Fulham.

The place was alive once again, and the home team's 2-0 victory was in keeping with the Blues' impressive record. One doesn't have to be a Chelsea supporter (although it helps!) to fully appreciate and savour the joy of seeing this great club back in the mainstream of our domestic football.

Firstly, it must be stated that alongside Tottenham and Arsenal, Chelsea is the only London club with the potential, the glamour and the tradition to attract a vast crowd wherever they play. Secondly, it also must be stated that this very same club fell from grace during the period immediately prior to this season.

The sacking of manager Dave Sexton, the exodus of countless excellent players, the seemingly interminable erection of the costly new stand, had a numbing effect on the team's football. Stamford Bridge, the ancient ground, beloved by all of us despite its many deficiencies, where once Lawton, Walker, Bentley, Greaves and other immortals trod the turf, resembled a lop-sided graveyard, while a team of lethargic nonentities sunk into Division Two.

Even the most ardent Chelsea fanatic must have sensed that the end was nigh, as the men in sober suits and striped shirts asked for their money back — the money borrowed to build the stand. Not much money mind you. A mere three million pounds!

To create a team out of the ashes of an old one is an awesome task at the best of times, and under these depressing financial circumstances, this target seemed an impossibility, even for the game's most experienced sorcerers. Yet, against all odds, it has been done by a 36-years-old Glaswegian with no previous managerial record.

The man, of course, is Eddie McCreadie, ex-full back, ex-Scottish international and a born winner if I ever met one. Eddie joined Chelsea for a pittance in 1962, when he arrived from East Stirling together with two other players, Jim Mulholland and Tommy Knox. Of the three, he was the only one to really establish himself as a swashbuckling, hard-tackling, all-action defender.

Over 450 games for Chelsea, an F.A. Cup winner's medal and 23 Scottish caps bear witness that he was no "ordinary" player — indeed, at the peak of his career, he was the best full-back in Britain. Eddie still speaks with affection about Dave Sexton, and after his mentor's departure, McCreadie took over the coaching of the first team and was appointed manager in the spring of 1975.

Although I see most of Chelsea's home matches, I haven't seen much of McCreadie. He stays with his players after the games or has a quiet drink with friends in his office. This is not the aloof behaviour of an unapproachable manager, but of a rather tough character who believes that his team's football on the pitch should speak for him.

And this season, their imaginative play laced with vigour and enthusiasm is speaking volumes of good leadership, sensible coaching. I visited the young Chelsea boss in his warm, comfortable office, and the talk was illuminating, frank and interesting, with the constantly clattering typewriter of Miss Jacky Bygraves ("I am the first Chelsea manager to have his own secretary") supplying the background music.

"What is the present set-up at Chelsea?"

"Ron Suart, the General Manager, looks after the maintenance of the ground and matters concerning the employment of staff. I run the first team in every respect. Coaching, the buying and selling of players, contracts, all negotiations are my responsibility. I do think that it is the best way. I am the coach, I can evaluate a player's worth better than anyone else. I see them train, I see them play".

"Your appointment came as a surprise, since you had just finished playing at that time. Was the beginning very difficult? How do you motivate players?"

"It was hard to control players with whom I was associated for a number of years. But when I took over, I explained that I knew what I wanted from them, and that I was a different "kettle of fish" from the guy they used to see in the number 3 shirt. Gradually, most of my playing colleagues have left the club — it had to be done! The current side of youngsters have immense potential. We could be a really good side in two years, and the best in the country in four.

"When I first talked to them I made it clear that the days of the "names" (stars) are over at Chelsea. Everyone is equal, nobody has a place reserved for him in the team. In earlier years, complacency used to creep in because there were too many "automatic selections" in the side. The players must "motivate" each other — they are friends, they are a group with the same ambitions. I do my part by being fair.

"When I was a player and had a really good game, the manager used to come into the dressing room after the match and say 'Well done!' Well done? That's all? I felt deflated. Now I go in and say — You, you and you — great, fantastic! They have worked hard, they deserve to be praised".

"What is your playing philosophy?"

"We play 4-3-1-2 — without wingers! I have my midfield players going wide, and the defenders have a licence to come up with the ball as often as they want to. "Butch" Wilkins, our 20-years-old international, a brilliant player, is the 'I' playing up front of the midfield and slightly behind the two strikers, Finnieston and Swain. I devised this system myself, and it is the most difficult to play against".

"Why?"

"How would you play against it?"

"Umm, I would put a midfield player on Wilkins".

"That suits me, most teams do that. (McCreadie puts five pieces of paper on his desk representing his midfield

David Peach of Southampton puts the final nail in Chelsea's FA Cup coffin this year by scoring his side's third goal during extra time. The Chelsea goalkeeper is John Phillips.

of Stanley-Britton-Lewington, and his strikers. Wilkins in the shape of a keyring with a miniature football hanging from it, is strategically positioned between a laundry list and a cryptic message from the trainer.) If a midfielder picks him up, it gives us extra space to create chances for the strikers.

Southampton tried to do that, and they failed. Some clubs push one of their centre-backs forward — great, then my strikers can move freely. If a full-back marks Wilkins, we can murder them on the flanks. And as our strikers change places and go to the wings quite often, there is always opportunity for Wilkins to get into the box, make really good forward runs. I tried the same system with Charlie Cooke as the "key-figure" last season. But he is not so dynamic as "Butch". Space must be created, and when it is there, it must be exploited!"

Coaching

"Do you think that there is too much coaching in this country?"

"Definitely. I passed my exams with distinction, so I believe in a certain amount of coaching. In fact, players have got to be taught the right habits. But do not transform them into robots. It is wrong to tell them 'Don't do this, don't do that, play it simple'. One must encourage them to express themselves. We must not be negative. British footballers can play, but too many of them are ruined by coaching.

"It is rubbish to say that the Italians have more skill than we have. Whay they have and we lack is composure. The confidence to play it easy, to put a foot on the ball. Perhaps it is something to do with national characteristics. We run around aimlessly, while they have this nonchalant approach.

"We can't relax on a football field — that is an art in itself. Remember the England v W. Germany game at Wembley, Alan Hudson had the answer in that match. He had composure, he had confidence to dictate. When he had the ball, he just stood there, goading the Germans to take it away from him, then he was away in a flash. Osgood, Currie and a few others also have this gift".

"What is wrong with our national team?"

"I have a lot of respect for Don Revie. The disappointing results are not his fault. The system is wrong — too much haste, not enough thought. We use the ball at Chelsea for 80 per cent of the time during training, and use the other 20 per cent for stamina, running and other work. At most clubs the ratio is exactly the opposite.

Criticism

"We coaches must tell players like Keegan, Channon, Todd, that they are brilliant! There is no need for them to rush around in international matches. Praise, like criticism, must be constructive. The players are clever, they twig you in five minutes, and if they don't trust you, they crucify you. Revie knows all that, but he has to work with the material he gets from the clubs".

"There is a suggestion that there should be a "Common Market Cup" for the Second Division champions of the member countries. Would that interest Chelsea?"

"It would be an invaluable experience for us. The League Cup game against Arsenal at Highbury in front of a large crowd was worth half-a-dozen matches to a young side like ours."

"Refereeing?"

"I don't want to say too much because I was in trouble last season. Refs. do have a hard job — they have to make split-second decisions. About a couple of years ago I would have said that refereeing in this country was the best in the world. But the standard has deteriorated disastrously. Inconsistency is the worst feature. In the same match, a player gets booked for something, and five minutes later another player gets away scot-free with the same offence. I don't believe in creating an elite of professional refs.

"But as a group, they ought to visit clubs, talk to the players, watch us train, understand what we are trying to do, learn to sort out the con-men from the genuine blokes. Why aren't they (the refs.) allowed to socialize after the game? Why do they consider themselves a group apart, mistrusted and ostracised? More contact off the field might help.

"Something must be done, because it is a tragedy when after working hard all week, one man's inconsistency can cost you the match. The only regulation I'd like to see changed concerns the cancellation of matches. Not just the referee, but the two managers as well should decide whether a pitch is playable or not. If the managers think that it is too dangerous, the game must be called off".

"The future of football?"

"Tommy Docherty shocked the people in this country last season with his attacking policy at Manchester United. He was copied by others, and the gospel of attacking football is spreading. We at Chelsea are aiming to emulate the consistency of Liverpool, the professionalism of the old Leeds side coupled with our own style of positive football".

With young, forward-looking managers like Eddie McCreadie in charge of our premier clubs, it is impossible not to share the Chelsea manager's optimism. So far he has been as good as his promises, but the trouble is that others with similar ideas, often tend to become pragmatic, surrender to "pressures" and revert to the negativism of their cautious predecessors.

with EDDIE McCREADIE (Chelsea)

Henri van der Steen from Holland

Utrecht 'fans' go on rampage

A WAVE of soccer hooliganism has been evident in Holland. Soccer trains have been wrecked, people wounded and the worst offenders have been the "fans" of FC Utrecht.

Perhaps it has something to do with the exciting football being seen in Holland this season. Who knows?

Ajax are still going strong, with Feyenoord unable to make up lost ground. AZ '67 and PSV remain in pursuit while at the bottom five points separate eight clubs. It is impossible to predict who will win the championship . . . or which clubs will go down.

The New Year started with a match between Ajax (top) and Graafschap (bottom) yet even so the former European Cup winners still played with two sweepers. The result was a dull, goalless draw. Tomaslav Ivic doesn't seem concerned.

The hopes of AZ '67 were not helped by two successive away defeats. But for that they would be challenging Ajax and Feyenoord. Their midfield trio of Willem van Hanegem, Kristian Nygaard and Peter Arntz is as strong as the widely praised Jansen-Kreuz-De Jong of Feyenoord.

At the back AZ '67 are improving, too. Young sweeper Ronald Spelbos is playing much better and ex-midfield star Hugo Heverkamp, who lost his place when Van Hanegem arrived, is playing left back and shows such good form that he is tipped for an international cap.

FC Feyenoord manager Vujadin Boskov with club secretary Mr. E. Egars and goalkeeper Eddie Treitel.

Operations

Up front they have Bobby Vosmaar back in contention after two operations for a knee injury. Vosmaar looked very good in a pre-season friendly against Manchester United and was top scorer (14 goals) for Kees Kist last season.

PSV haven't given up hope of catching Ajax. In a two week period they bought three players . . . Tom Smits was signed from NAC Breda, from Sweden came centre forward Torbjohn Nilsson and from Germany young Willrich

The critics questioned the decision of trainer Kees Rijvers and manager Ben van Gelder to buy three attackers and not one defender. Rijvers replied that with PSV playing smoothly up front, they will have no problems at the back. International sweeper Adri van Kraay does a good job when PSV are attacking, but he doesn't "run" the back four too well.

Improved

Struggling FC Twente have improved a bit. They are out of contention for a place in Europe next season, but they have no relegation worries either. Goalkeeper Volkmar Gross, a German, left the club and went to Tennis Berlin.

FC Utrecht, the surprise team of the season, have had to fight hard to remain in third place. The team of 26-years-old trainer Han Berger have only four more points than tenth placed Sparta Rotterdam. With such a close championship, gates have improved on last year. Ajax, however, cannot be happy with their attendances, which average only around 12,000.

News from France by ANDRE DUCLOS

Six of France scores during a friendly match against Bor. Mochengladbach at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris. France won 5-0. The German player (6) is Ringels.

PAGE-JONES PLANS HIS COME-BACK

FOR NIGEL PAGE-JONES, the solitary Englishman remaining in the French League, this has been a very sad season. I only hope that by the time you read these notes, he will be playing again regularly for Brest, the team for whom he has done so well in the Second Division over the years, sometimes in midfield, sometimes as left-back.

Still barely 30 years old, Page-Jones by the end of 1976 had still to play a League game this season for Brest, the team of which he became captain, two years ago. He damaged his knee in training just before this season opened, damaged it again as soon as he tried to come back, and then just when it looked as though it was healed, the poor fellow pulled a muscle and had to put back his return to League football and a Brest team which surely needs him, yet again.

This meant a spell at the physical re-education centre at Treboul, where among his fellow footballers was the enormously gifted Ivory Coast centre-forward, now with Rennes, Laurent Pokou, who must I suppose be wondering ruefully whether he was right at last to take the trail to France, after all those years of refusing every offer.

Page-Jones, like all the Brest players, is a part-timer. He has an executive position with the B.A.I. company which runs the car ferries from Roscoff, in Britanny, to Plymouth. When he ceases to play for Brest it is expected that he will end his playing days with the Saint Pol de Leon club. He is vastly respected as a serious and dedicated professional.

Had Brest not been content to stay in Division II, where they can technically remain "amateur", and had not his wife, who comes from Brest, not been reluctant to leave her native city, there is little doubt that we should have seen this competent, solid player in First Division football.

Of course everyone connected with French football is delighted by the fact that young Michel Platini has been chosen among the Five European Footballers of the Year. Just reward for a player who threw off the effects of a cartilage operation almost casually; as indeed did Jean-Michel Larqué, the skipper and midfield creator of Saint Etienne.

In a sense, Platini's achievement was the greater because he was not playing for Saint Etienne, one of the finest, most successful teams in Europe, but for the relatively obscure Nancy. This meant, inevitably, that not a great deal could have been seen of this dynamic player, midfielder, goal scorer and free kick expert extraordinary, by the European Press at large.

He did, as we know, play in the Olympic tournament in Montreal with success, and had a fine game in Sofia against Bulgaria in the World Cup eliminator.

There has been some controversy lately over comparisons made between the excellent Reims teams which did so well in the late 1950s in the European Cup and the present Saint Etienne side. Albert Batteux, team manager of the French international team of 1958, and a major figure of the period, had some sour observations to make on the subject. René Bliard, a member, though scarcely the most distinguished one, of that Reims side was very critical of Larqué, who retorted brusquely, "Who is Bliard?"

Comparisons are surely, in such a context, not merely odious but deeply irrelevant.

Hardly has Norbert Alonso arrived in France, it seems, than he will be on his way back to South America; with Paul Cesar perhaps returning to Marseilles to take his place. A strange affair. Alonso is the Argentinian inside-left who, a few summers ago, scored that glorious left footed goal from a free kick against West Germany. This season Olympique Marseille bought him, but he has not been happy there. Home-sickness is said to have something to do with it; but so has the fact that he has come to realise that he is earning far less than several other star members of the team.

In the meanwhile Paulo Cesar, a controversial and exuberant figure as we know, who was forever jaunting off home to Brazil when we did have him in France, says he is eager to leave Fluminense and come back to Marseille. Whether it would be wise to take him is another matter; though it seems that Marseille are strongly tempted.

It is also open to question whether they have really managed to get the best out of Norbert Alonson, who was after all quite one of the most gifted players in Argentina. No doubt the team manager, Menotti, would be very glad to see him back there again, were he to return to an Argentinian club, rather than join Fluminense in a swep deal.

When Alonso revisited Buenos Aires, recently, he made it quite clear that his chief ambition was to play for his country in the 1978 World Cup, and that he expected to be returning there next June.

BRAZIL MAKE THEIR PLANS

South American Group 1
Brazil, Paraguay, Colombia

BRAZIL IS looking further ahead than their February/March World Cup qualifying matches against Colombia and Paraguay and coach Oswaldo Brandao is preparing to take his squad to Europe during 1977 not only to face European tactics but also the cold climate they are likely to encounter in the World Cup finals during the Argentine winter.

The team Brandao picked against the Soviet Union on December 1, the first of a series of "warm ups" for the qualifying games, included only goalkeeper Leao from the last World Cup team as he did not pick any players from 18 top clubs then still engaged in the Brazilian national championship.

But the team was good enough to beat the young Soviet Union side — also an experimental line up — by 2-0 with late goals from Falcao (74m) and Zico (87m) as the Russians tired out in the hot, humid atmosphere.

Earlier in the year, Brazil were easy winners of the Atlantic Cup tournament (against Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay) in which they also fielded less than full strength teams as players from champion club Cruzeiro and vice-champions Internacional were left out to concentrate on the Libertadores Cup. In fact, Brandao was blamed for making too many changes — 29 players in six matches — and the team did not always convince, winning three matches with late goals, once however with only nine men on the field in Montevideo.

Nevertheless, Brazil was by far the best team in the tournament in which they dropped only one point precisely to Paraguay in Asunción, although they were well on top. (It was the only match of eleven which Brazil failed to win last year.)

This was followed by the United States Bicentennial tournament in which Brazil also won all their three matches and while we haven't seen the Brazil of old all year, we haven't seen them put a really full strength team on the field either. Yet they showed some players of real promise such as forwards Zico (whom many liken to Pele), newcomer Gil, Palinha and Nelinho, while one of their features were their dangerous free kicks.

While Pele, who is assisting Brandao, thinks it will be practically impossible to beat Argentina on their home ground in 1978, Roberto Avila, another of Brandao's assistant coaches, says that Brazil will cause a surprise in the World Cup by not letting rivals play as freely as before. They will mark closer and use more destructive tactics without sacrificing their special brand of attractive soccer.

Brandao intended to call up a squad of 40 players as soon as the Brazilian championship ended (in December) to start serious training early in January.

PARAGUAY's squad, picked mainly from four clubs (Libertad, Olimpia, Cerro Porteño, River Plate) started training under coach Ramon Rodriguez at the end of October. The team is based mainly on experienced players who took part in the Atlantic Cup and the Libertadores Cup with their clubs (Olimpia and Cerro) and it is also hoped to include players presently with clubs abroad.

Chile's national team coach Caupolican talking to the squad before the match against Argentina.

Paraguay did unexpectedly well in the six-match Atlantic Cup — their only international matches during 1976 — in which they had a win 1, drew 3, lost 2 record and left Uruguay behind in fourth place.

COLOMBIA's hectic league programme was in its final stages at press time and with clubs reluctant to give up their stars, serious preparation was not going to commence until early in the new year. Colombian clubs still have many foreign (South American) players on their books, which means that a national team may not compare with league strength, but Colombia, whose only international last year was a somewhat unlucky 2-1 home defeat versus Uruguay, were losing finalists in the last South American Championships in 1975 and have a number of experienced players to call on.

South American Group 2
Uruguay, Bolivia, Venezuela

URUGUAY SHOULD be good enough to beat Bolivia and Venezuela for a place in the South American final qualifying group in spite of their unbelievably poor international record during 1976 when they won only one, drew five and lost five of 11 matches all played in South America against often poor opposition.

Uruguay finished bottom of the Atlantic Cup, using 31 players in the six matches without any sign of improvement. Brazil beat them at home (2-1) scoring the winner near the end with only nine men on the field and although Uruguay gave their best performance in the rough return match at Rio where Brazil also won 2-1 with a penalty 17 minutes from the end, the under-strength home team was on top all the way.

Argentina put up their best performance and obtained their biggest win of the year (4-1) against them in Buenos Aires and literally played with the opposition in the return match (3-0) in Montevideo. Uruguay picked up the only point in a home draw with Paraguay, but were destined to bottom place when losing 1-0 in Asunción — Paraguay scored only four minutes from the end but deserved it. Immediately afterwards coach Juan Manuel Rodriguez resigned.

In September, Argentine-born ex-Uruguayan international Eduardo Hohberg was put in charge after a tug-of-war with Nacional who did not want to release him from his coaching contract at first. Nacional, well placed at the time, went on to take the Uruguayan major league title and Hohberg may yet regret having switched over to a loser.

Hohberg set about picking a young squad — average age 22 — with speed in mind and including only one former World Cup player — forward Fernando Morena who has been off form all season, specially in international games (in spite of which he played in 10 of the 11). But while Hohberg included newcomers, half of the 35-men squad had played in the Atlantic Cup earlier in the year.

Transfers abroad of all players in the squad and all others under 23 have been banned to avoid losing further World Cup material and the squad has been training hard — frequently concentrated at Maldonado (some 140km down the coast from Montevideo and near the famous Punta del Este seaside resort) — and playing numerous practice matches since September.

But in October, Uruguay went on a disastrous South American tour, partly to get used to high altitude, on which they drew three games (0-0 v Peru and Chile, 2-2 v Ecuador) and somewhat luckily won 2-1 in Colombia with goals in the last 10 minutes when two late substitutions proved successful.

Uruguay lacked initiative and teamwork in attack (with Morena hanging back) and the

WORLD SOCCER SPECIAL

ERIC WEIL

previews the World Cup qualifying rounds in South America

WORLD SOCCER SPECIAL

soccer played was poor, although they may have found a dangerous scorer in Waldemar Victorino who netted three of the four tour goals. And it was the same story in their last match of the year (in Montevideo), a 0-0 draw with Peru in which there was no good soccer and no good performances at all.

BOLIVIA, however, are not likely to offer a threat. Their altitude may favour them in home games, but it works the other way round when Bolivia plays away . . . and they haven't played a single international during 1976.

VENEZUELA should be even less of a problem. Clubs have been reluctant to give up players with the championship in progress and it has been impossible to field the same selected side twice running in trial games against clubs. As exasperated team coach Jose Hernandez says, it has been impossible to carry out plans made in October to "at least lose honourably".

As part of the "plan", Venezuela intended to play high altitude Bolivia at low lying Acarigua and face Uruguay in Merida which is 2000 metres above sea level. But this was scotched when it was ruled that Venezuela must play its home games in Caracas as originally scheduled.

Team selection however should not be difficult. Most clubs are still top heavy with foreign players and there are only about 15 players of class and experience eligible for World Cup duty.

Defence is Venezuela's strongest department with experienced Freddy, Marin and Ochoa all playing for champions Portuguesa and forming the best defence in the country. In Kimba Brito they have a spectacular but irregular goalkeeper so that the more dependable Pedro Miguel (of Spanish origin) may be preferred. Mendoza, the best player in the country, is a certainty for half (and chief organiser), but he is getting past his best.

The forwards available are fast and clever, tend to be better at home but lack experience because Venezuela so often has to play a defensive game and in 1976 they have not played any full internationals at all.

South American Group 3
Peru, Chile, Ecuador

A CLOSE fight is expected between Peru and Chile for a South American final group place while Ecuador, though likely to be hard to beat at home (where they are scheduled to play their first two matches in February), are not expected to come into the final reckoning.

Peru got off to an early start with new national team coach, Alejandro Heredia, named last June, picking a young squad (average age 22) and including only veteran defender Julio Melendez, 33, an experienced international who was not in Peru's excellent World Cup finalists of 1970 because he was playing for Boca Juniors in Argentina at the time (where he won the 1969 and 1970 national championships with Boca and was the country's outstanding back). Melendez is now player coach with Juan Aurich who have climbed up to fourth place in the Peruvian league and he is playing better than ever.

Since the middle of the year, Peru has played half a dozen strong Argentine clubs, home and away, with generally poor results while their four full internationals in 1976 — two 0-0 draws with Uruguay and two defeats against Argentina (both home and away) — have not been encouraging either. Peru showed a lack of ideas, specially from midfield upwards.

While Peruvian officials mentioned the possibility of including players currently with foreign clubs in the World Cup qualifying games — such as Rojas, Ramirez, Cubilla, Sotil (all with World Cup experience) and Soria — Heredia (whose contract, like that of all Peruvian coaches, is for a year only) does not like the idea. Only Rojas and Soria, who play for Argentina's Independiente, were included in matches against Argentina.

Peru does not have the skilful players it had in 1970 when it eliminated Argentina in the preliminary group and reached the quarter finals in Mexico. Nor do they have a coach like Brazil's Waldir Pereyra Didi who took them there and transmitted his style to the country's soccer in general, but Heredia, now 43, was one of his assistant coaches then and he has a lot of the same ideas and style. But he has a young and new team with little experience . . . and critics say that the squad is being burnt out with too much training and playing and that Chile's example should be followed.

CHILE was only going to assemble its national team for the World Cup group games at the end of the year after the end of the league season. Two international matches this year were played with a hastily assembled emergency team with players from four leading clubs, Everton, Union Espanola, Colo Colo and Universidad Catolica under new Chilean coach Caupolican and results (a 0-0 home draw with Uruguay and a 2-0 away defeat against Argentina) mean little.

Transfers to foreign clubs, which have drained Chilean soccer of its stars in recent years, have been banned until after the qualifying games for which it is also hoped to be able to include all Chile's best players with foreign clubs. It is also expected that the improving standard of league soccer in Chile this season would soon make its mark on the national team also.

So it looks like **Brazil, Uruguay and Chile** or **Peru** for the South American final group from which the top two will go directly into the World Cup finals while the third will have to play for a place with the European group nine winner.

Brazil, who look favourites to top that group also, named a squad of 29 players at press time which includes four of their last World Cup team — goalkeeper Leao, back Marinho, half Rivelino and forward Paulo Cesar — while defender Luis Pereira, one of their outstanding players in West Germany and currently with Atletico Madrid, is on a list of another 11 possibles, but as far as I know, Brazil has never chosen a player with a club outside the country.

Valencia (Argentina) gets past Suchilin (USSR) in the international played in Buenos Aires. The match ended 0-0.

CRISIS AT SUAREZ TR

by Keir Radnedge

LUIS ARAGONES SUAREZ has been trainer of Atletico Madrid now for just over two years, since his sudden promotion from midfield general to replace Juan Carlos Lorenzo.

It seemed he had all the ingredients to succeed, that he was happy at Atletico and Atletico happy with him — from players to directors.

Now that's all in doubt after a stunning episode with Atletico, two points from the top of the table, in which Luis tried to quit. He announced that his reasons were "family" — "I have five children and a wife who need me. I've spent too much time in football, not enough with them.

"I've been thinking of this for some time and I don't think Atletico can complain. After all, I've won the world club cup and the Spanish Cup for them in the past two seasons.

"There's no going back either. I will continue merely as caretaker until a successor is named, and then I'm leaving."

But it's not as simple as that. For a start it was thought Luis had *really* quit because of pressure from above. It was known he hadn't been happy with the summer purchases over his head of either midfielder Antonio Robi or centre forward Ruben Cano.

But the board voted unanimously to reject Luis's resignation and after a three-hour meeting he emerged weary but apparently ready to continue. So, if the directors were on Luis's side — and that wasn't the case when he was first appointed — who was pushing him? (Luis's excuse of "family problems" was interpreted only as meaning problems in the Atletico family".)

For there is a schism in the ranks, forced open last summer after Atletico's victory in the Carranza trophy in Cadiz. Later that night, it seems, Atletico's foreign-born stars — Luis Pereira, Joao Leivinha, Ruben Ayala, Ramon Heredia, Domingo Benegas and Heraldo Becerra — decided that Atletico could not make the progress they wanted while Luis was coach and Buenos Aires-born Jose Eulogio Garate the skipper.

It wasn't that they wanted either man forced out of the club. Just that they felt at times left out or taken for granted. Even that, as foreigners, too much was expected of them for what they received in return.

Garate's hold on the captaincy — indeed perhaps his entire playing career — has since disappeared. In a league match at Elche he suffered a cut ankle which later grew infected.

Club doctors were so slow to realise what was happening that Garate's very life was in danger through blood poisoning before he was whisked into hospital for blood transfusions.

For days his life hung in the balance, then he started to recover. But at 32 his chances of returning to big-time soccer seem to have gone. In Garate's absence the South Americans pressed for Argentinian winger Ayala to be named team captain (the nominal post of *club* captain is held by reserve midfielder Ignacio Salcedo, by virtue of length of service). Luis agreed in the hope that this would pull the Spaniards and foreigners together.

No such luck. Luis was also forced to take back Becerra — the Brazilian striker had walked out in the summer in protest at being dropped — and though Atletico continued successfully in the league, the first hint of trouble came when they went down astonishingly 3-0 at home to newly-promoted Burgos.

Last month I reported on the background of Juan Gomez, known as Juanito, the former Atletico winger who has emerged as a big star with Burgos and will join Real Madrid later this year.

This 3-0 win in the Estadio Calderon was his revenge for being discarded years before by Atletico. He made the first two goals, and it was from a free kick for a foul on him by Ayala, that Burgos scored their third. For a team third from bottom of the first division it was an incredible result. Two days later, at training, Luis and his players held a hot-tempered post mortem.

The directors heard of the trouble brewing and instructed general manager Victor Martinez to travel with the team for the next game — away to Santander — and keep an eye on training, team selection, etc. Atletico, looking nothing like championship contenders, achieved a 0-0 draw. And a couple of days later came the Luis shock.

Problems

The following Sunday the visitors to the Manzanares were Zaragoza, second from bottom and with problems of their own. Atletico, with Heredia and Diaz out injured but all the other South Americans playing, won easily 2-0, both goals coming from Ayala, one from a penalty.

But it was far from a happy night. For a start, a dozen chances went begging; for another, the match was televised live. And that, on a bitterly cold night, meant that barely 4,000 fans turned up to watch!

Luis was asked afterwards if this Christmas would be a sad one. His reply was sarcastic in the extreme: "Why should it be sad? A week without football should mean quite a pleasant break."

In the meantime, if Luis was resting for a day or two, there was no rest in the guessing game about who succeeds him, for there seems no doubt he will be released at the season's end.

Dave Mackay, sacked by Derby, was one name mentioned. Atletico were impressed by Mackay when Derby put Atletico out of the UEFA Cup 2½ years ago. Then there are those who favour a return for Juan Carlos Lorenzo, who has just steered Boca Juniors to the Argentina title.

Even Miguel Munoz, former Real Madrid boss, has been suggested. He wouldn't be the first coach to swap sides. Jose Villalonga took Real to their first Champions' Cup in 1955-56, then later steered Atletico to the Cup-winners' Cup.

There has also been mention of Hennes Weisweiler — though his appointment would not please the foreigners. He dropped all his South Americans at Barcelona and is not improving his reputation with his present difficulties in player management at Koln.

First he clashed with schemer Wolfgang Overath, then he upset the players' wives by taking their husbands away to the Canaries for special training over Christmas.

The South Americans have had little to say publicly on the Luis case. Ayala's replies have been typical: "I don't want to talk about it. Now is not the time. People can say what they like, but I'll talk when I'm ready and not before."

A couple even tried to deny that a meeting in Cadiz had taken place. But not full back Diaz. He not only confirmed that a meeting had been held, but said that some of the young reserves had attended too!

Linked

At any rate, there is still mystery as to whether Weisweiler's name is being linked with Atletico or . . . Real.

For Miljan Miljanic is having no success turning the tide of poor results and the 4-0 defeat by Atletico with which Real began the new year only increased speculation that his contract will be cut short.

The injury problems don't appear to be easing, but — the Juanito deal apart — there are few signs that Miljanic is doing much planning ahead for next season. Madrid were interested in Enrique Castro, better known as Quini, Spanish international centre forward of second division Gijon. He's top scorer in the lower division — hardly surprising — with 17 goals from 17 games, and Gijon look well set for a return to the top flight.

Not surprisingly they want to keep him and the bait of a lucrative new contract, though well below what Madrid could afford, will probably be enough to keep him in a town where he's been well settled for eight years. In the meantime, Madrid have to rely on sweeper Pirri (!) for goals in the continuing absence of Henning Jensen.

I don't believe there's any truth in stories that Jensen knew he had knee trouble when he signed for Madrid and that Borussia Moenchengladbach kept it all a secret.

But it's true that while in his four years in the *Bundesliga* he missed only nine out of a possible 136 games, he has missed half Madrid's league games through injury and only started light training again in January after a knee operation.

Jensen himself says he suffered more kicks in his first four months in Spain than in four years in West Germany. And he's not alone in feeling persecuted. Madrid's other foreigner, Paul Breitner, has his troubles too.

During the summer he was held at Munich airport for being in illegal possession of a small gun. Breitner insisted that he carried it for protection of his family in West Germany and that he had a licence.

ATLETICO - ES TO QUIT

Still, he has just been fined £2,500 in the Federal Republic for carrying it in his baggage at the airport. And the prosecution aren't satisfied. Breitner faces an appeal that the pistol and licence be confiscated.

In addition there is his longer-term future under discussion. Hamburg and Hertha Berlin have approached Breitner, and a return to West Germany when his contract expires at the end of the season would not be unsatisfactory.

He could maintain closer control on his business interests and also continue the college medical studies which he hopes will secure his future outside football.

Hertha have already made a tentative offer to Madrid of £250,000, but since the fee paid to Bayern Munich was not far off double, they'll need to think again if they are serious.

Breitner still hopes, nevertheless, to be able to sign for another year with Madrid. But he wants details tidied up by the end of February, and that's not only ridiculously early by Spanish standards, but might present embarrassing problems if Miljanic's future is still in doubt.

So it's up to Pirri to do all the hard work, saving points with his goals at one end and goal-line clearances at the other. He hit a hat-trick in a 5-2 win over Elche and two in a 3-3 draw with Santander, to become Madrid's top scorer with seven goals after the first 16 matches of the season.

In between came a 0-2 defeat away to Betis of Seville. It shows what kind of an attraction Madrid are at the moment that Betis, with the game televised live, offered free admission to women and still drew above 20,000 for the former six-times European champions.

Defeat

A 3-0 win over Las Palmas followed for Madrid, but then came the draw with Santander and defeat by Atletico and it looks as if the main effort for the rest of the season will be either in the Cup or in an attempt to secure a UEFA Cup place.

How Madrid must wish they could rediscover a forgotten sharpshooter within their squad the way Rinus Michels has reactivated Manuel Clares. He continued his run of success with *five* goals in a remarkable 6-1 win over championship challengers Valencia.

That result provoked some trouble in the Valencia ranks, particularly since Heriberto Herrera had left out Johnny Rep as a tactical change, in the hope of stifling the CFB forwards!

Barcelona have trouble with one of their Dutchman, and for a change that's not Cruyff, but Johan Neeskens. The midfielder was sent off somewhat harshly almost on half-time in a 0-0 draw with Celta de Vigo. It was his second sending-off of 1976 and also of his entire career — the other was in the European Championship semi-final with Czechoslovakia.

At least Neeskens was let off with a fine by the FEF and continued helping league leaders Barcelona in their championship chase. Though whether he will be at his best on the run-in seems in doubt for, like Breitner, he is more concerned at the moment about what the long-term future holds.

Neeskens has complained that he and his family can't live on £120,000 a year and that if Barcelona can't quickly come up with better terms he'll have no option but to leave at the season's end!

Where he could go for better money and career prospects I've no idea. Koln are supposed to be interested, but Neeskens would face far higher tax demands in West Germany than in Spain. He has already, in the past 12 months, achieved one pay rise inside his contract on the basis of the falling value of the peseta.

One suspects that Neeskens is playing a dangerous game. If CFB don't win the league this season there will be many people (several players and directors included) who will be gratified to see the back of both Neeskens and Cruyff.

Neeskens needs to be careful or he'll price himself out of the market altogether.

No deal

On his way to Spain apparently is Rainer Bonhof. But though Borussia Mg have agreed to sell him to Valencia, no deal will go through until after the 1978 World Cup and by that time a lot could have changed. Bonhof is said to be mystified that Valencia are prepared to wait that long and wonders whether he's bound for the right club.

Valencia clearly want to keep their options open while they have their two foreigners, Rep and Mario Kempes doing so well. Presumably president Jose Ramos Costa anticipates Rep leaving when his contract expires at the end of season 1977-78, but by then (so Borussia hope!) Bonhof won't be so keen to go.

All very devious. In the meantime, Valencia have made new inquiries about Espanol Barcelona inside forward Daniel Solsona, even though he hasn't kicked a ball all season.

This highly-talented player contracted hepatitis during the summer, yet had the audacity recently to ask president Manuel Meler for a pay rise!

Meler, a shrewd man (he has to be to keep Espanol solvent) is playing very cagily. But he has an extra reason not to upset Solsona — Chilean striker Carlos Caszely will be out for the rest of the season after breaking a leg in training.

And Caszely had been given permission to join Chile's squad for the World Cup qualifiers only a few days before!

In his absence Espanol went down 3-2 to CFB in the Catalan derby. CFB, of course, also remain one of Spain's two survivors in the UEFA Cup. Bilbao are the others, after squeaking through against AC Milan.

Bilbao — the club's name is *Athletic* not Atletico, thanks to its British origins — will be one of the centres for the 1982 World Cup and plans are already well advanced to build a new stadium in the centre of the city. Meanwhile the old Estadio San Mames nearly saw one more surprise to add to a history of them when former Bilbao favourite Carmelo Sedrun brought his Celta team for a well-deserved 2-2 draw.

It could have been a 3-2 win, but referee Sanchez Arminio ruled out a late Celta goal by Jose Igartua — much to Carmelo's displeasure, for Celta are hovering just above Malaga, Zaragoza and Salamanca in the relegation zone. Slipping down would be a harsh blow for Zaragoza who haven't been in the lower division — save one season in 1971-72 — since the mid-fifties. Coach Lucien Muller is under increasing pressure, and that's beginning to have an affect.

After the 2-0 defeat by Atletico in Madrid he ran forward to protest to referee Jose Luis Orrantia about a penalty awarded to Atletico and the expulsion of Zaragoza left winger Juanjo.

His remakrs earned a four-match ban at a time when Zaragoza badly need his authority to be heard from the touchline, for there are few signs of the cold war between strikers Arrua and Jordao coming to an end.

In brief

PABLO PORTA has been re-elected president of Real Federacion Espanola de Futbol. No one stood against him, but even so his appointment was not unanimous. Real Sociedad de San Sebastian withheld their vote in protest at his lack of action over the "illegal foreigners" row.

TRAINERS MOVING . . . Ferenc Puskas has finally taken over Chile's Colo Colo . . . Hector Rial has quit Spanish second division Coruna — his health is breaking down . . . former Brazilian World Cup centre forward Vava is back — replacing ex-Valencia forward Hector Nunez at Granada. They're bottom of the second division and risk going from first to third in successive seasons.

MORE PROBLEMS in the lower divisions . . . a series of bribery cases involving referees are expected to come out into the open shortly . . . a lot of third division players are worried. From next season the division's 80 clubs are supposed to register only four over-23s. Now there are more than 800 — that's 500 too many!

PLENTY OF messages of sympathy from Spain to Argentina after the recent death of Antonio Liberti. Who was he? One of the outstanding men in Argentine soccer, for years president of River Plate and the man who supervised the building of the Monumental stadium in 1938 which will stage the next World Cup Final.

Can man to man marking be beaten?

IS MAN to man marking unbeatable? Is zonal marking obsolete? Six months ago in New York, after England had beaten Italy, the boot seemed to be on the other foot. Now, Italy having beaten England in Rome and smothered their three front runners in the process, the whole picture has changed. In less than a year now, England must face Italy and their man to man markers at Wembley in the World Cup return match, one in which the Italians are likely to be far more defensive than in Rome. If we couldn't find space there, how could we find it at Wembley?

by **BRIAN GLANVILLE**

Action from the Italy versus England match played in Rome last November.

Yet the whole debate is complicated by the fact that in Italy just now there is a powerful movement away from man to man marking and towards our own, zonal game. How can this be explained? Back in Rome last week, I talked to Luis Vinicio, the Brazilian manager of Lazio and a leading exponent of the zonal game, and Nils Liedholm, the former Swedish internatonal who manages Rome. Both saw the recent game; both were thoroughly disappointed by England.

So, for that matter, was Emlyn Hughes, who played for them, and shook his head sadly when he lamented the fact that the three English front runners, Channon, Bowles and Keegan, never once slipped their markers to get a run at the Italian defence, never once got in a shot. For this, he did not blame them, merely speculating, with bewilderment, whether this might be the fault of the midfield, which did not support them sufficiently, or the fault of his own back four, for not releasing the midfield. When as thoughtful and dedicated a professional as Hughes is as perplexed as this, it is a sign that the problem is indeed a tortuous one.

Opposing

As he pointed out, English defenders simply haven't the habit of marking so closely; they will always stand some four or five yards off, and if their opposing forward drops back, a few yards or so, then they will let him go.

The question is, it seems to me, are Italy's defensive tactics, which seemed hopelessly inadequate in the second half in New York but watertight in Rome, unbeatable, or is it simply a question of inadequacy in the English front three in particular and the team in general?

Vinicio, a splendid centre-forward in his day, said, "In my view, there was a great difference in class between the teams and their players. The English strikers seemed very limited. When you are playing against man to man marking, it's very important every now and then for one striker to free himself from his marker.

"That means another marker has to leave his man to fill the gap. But England just didn't manage this. You need fast wingers; but Keegan inexplicably never beat his man. He was always anticipated. When I've seen him

Kevin Keegan and Mike Channon of England tackle the Italian defence during their World Cup encounter in Rome.

play in the English Championship on television, he looked an exceptional player."

Liedholm too, a great admirer still of English football, especially the physical condition of the players, and one who played several times against us for Sweden, felt the quality of our players was much poorer than in the past.

"In the past there were great dribblers like Matthews and Finney who put the Italian defenders in difficulty. There's no nation which has men who run as well as the English, none with the same stamina. The air, the oxygen, the food: everything's in favour of the British athlete. But there seems to be a lack of quality among the players, a lack of men who can create.

"They're forgetting the individual side of things. The Brazilians, too, have a good collective kind of game, but they all know how to play individually and dribble, they don't always have to pass the ball." He feels that there is a lack of gymnastics in the English form of training, leading to stiffness of movement, and a lack of concentration on ball control.

He thinks, however, that the epoch of the creative midfield player, the "general", has gone; that now, creative play should be the responsibility of the back four players, who have more time to assess the game and to use the ball. He points out, too, that the condition of Italian players has greatly improved in recent years, that against England, Graziani, Bettega and Causio worked hard for the men behind them in midfield. There must, he says, be more movement, more switching and roaming among front runners faced by a man to man defence than was shown by the English strikers in Rome.

He also, whatever Bill Shankly's insistence that Bettega's goal might be the "goal of the century", points out that it was helped by indifferent marking in the penalty box: "Zonal marking is fine, but it must change in the penalty area. Bettega's a fine player, a very strong player, but he had that metre of freedom."

Movement

Vinicio's Lazio team, he says, mixes zonal with man to man marking. Away from home, against hard opposition, they mark very tightly on the man, but when the team breaks away, "they must all free themselves from their man, so they can join in the attack." At home, against weaker opposition, Lazio "play zonally, with a lot of movement by the full backs down the flanks."

If there is a simple moral to be drawn from all this, it seems to me less one of tactics than of technique; we need to develop better, more versatile players. It is significant too, given all the smug rubbish talked about the superiority of our modern game and its players to their predecessors, to hear a coach as sophisticated as Liedholm talk of Matthews and Finney.

Wingers can indeed still play a part. As Vinicio says, "Aerial play will be very important at Wembley next year; and you do that very well. Not the diagonal cross, though, which favours the defenders; but the cross pulled back from the line, which is all in favour of the attacker."

Who can do that, except a born winger?

There are other, interesting, theories on how the man to man system may be beaten. When I asked George Best, one of the finest individual talents in the history of our football, he replied crisply and cogently that it was a question of whether or not the men being marked were superior to the markers. In the case of the England players against Italy, quite clearly they were not.

Another most gifted individualist, Rodney Marsh, now Best's colleague at Fulham, opined that you could do what the Dutch do; simply draw everybody back into midfield. Why didn't England do that? I asked. It wasn't, said Rodney, the fault of the players if they didn't.

In the meantime, note that the Italians were well beaten 2-1 in that Portuguese friendly, even if their players, in a match of that kind and so close to Christmas, were hardly likely to risk life and limb. The man to man marking was no great shakes. Gentile, who smothered Bowles, didn't look at all good faced by an orthodox, powerful centre-forward such as Nene. Cuccureddu was struggling. Both seemed in danger of losing their place. Draw from that whatever moral you please. The one that thrusts itself on me is somewhat depressing.

Player Portrait on Ralf Edstroem

SWEDEN, PERHAPS more than most European countries, have shown a remarkable facility for throwing up a star centre-forward in each new football generation. First after the last war came Gunnar Nordahl, one of three brothers and a man who had enjoyed a prolific career with Milan. Then, as he faded out, along came Agne Simonsson who led the attack of runners-up Sweden in the 1958 World Cup. He also scored twice as Sweden, in 1959, beat England 3-2 to become only the second continental team to win at Wembley.

Sadly his career foundered after he entered the shadow of Alfredo di Stefano at Real Madrid, but soon the Swedes had another leader — Ove Kindvall. More of a goal poacher than a traditional centre-forward, he led Feyenoord to the Champions' Cup in 1970 and then Sweden in the World Cup. And, two and a half years ago, one World Cup further on confirmed the emergence of the latest in a famous line.

Ralf Edstroem was born on July 7, 1952 in Degerfors, southern Sweden. And though while at school he showed promise as a high jumper and in basketball, it was to soccer that he settled.

In 1969 he played seven times for Degerfors' local team, a side perpetually vacillating between the second and third divisions, and before the year was out had played for Sweden's under-18 side.

At first he played in midfield, but his height — he is now six foot six — and heading ability soon directed him up to centre-forward, which is where he was playing when several of the big Swedish clubs came calling. Yet surprisingly, it wasn't to Stockholm or Gothenburg that Edstroem decided to go, but to Atvidaberg, where the small-town atmosphere was more reminiscent of Degerfors and more to his liking.

Atvidaberg, whom he joined in January 1971, had already made quite an impact though it had been only in 1967 that they won the right to play in the first division for the second time in their history.

The previous spell had lasted just one season — 1951-52. But this time they were clearly going to stay. In 1970 they won the Cup and though they went out in the first round of the Cup-winners' Cup to Partizan Tirana (1-1, 0-2) they displayed some outstanding youngsters.

Among them were defender Kent Karlsson, and three forwards later bound for West Germany — Conny Torstensson (Bayern), Roland Sandberg (Kaiserslautern) and Benno Magnusson (Kaiserslautern and Hertha).

Edstroem went straight into the first team, the ideal replacement for Ove Eklund who had moved into the professional ranks. And coach Sven-Agne Larsson was delighted at the progress he made in just one season.

Atvidaberg won the Cup again and finished second in the league, just two points behind Malmoe and knocked Zaglebie Sosnowiecz (4-3, 1-1) and holders Chelsea (0-0, 1-1) out of the Cup-winners' Cup. Edstroem played in all four games and his instant reward was a place in the Swedish under-22 team.

The next year — 1972 — Atvidaberg went one better, winning the championship with 65 goals, the most for 12 years. Edstroem and Sandberg finished joint top scorers with 16 apiece — a remarkable achievement for Edstroem, who scored only twice in the first 11 games.

Then he hit four in a 4-1 win over Norrkoeping, and that was it. He missed only three of the 22 league matches because of injury and also gained further European experience in the spring when Atvidaberg went out of the Cup-winners' Cup at the quarter final stage — beaten 0-2, 2-2 by Dynamo East Berlin. He impressed plenty of people, including Georg Ericsson, Sweden's manager, who chose Edstroem for his full international debut against Denmark in June.

Then, on August 6, came the all-important second international which was to turn Edstroem into an international 'name'. The opponents were Russia, and Edstroem *headed* a hat-trick in the 4-4 draw.

That, plus his contribution to Atvidaberg's championship, was more than enough to earn him the accolade of Footballer of the Year. But already, his days in Sweden were numbered.

Late in the season Kees Rijvers, new coach to PSV Eindhoven, had come to Sweden to watch Norrkoeping defender Bjorn Nordqvist. Rijvers was suitably impressed, but he was equally taken with the lanky centre-forward facing Nordqvist.

Rijvers moved quickly and in return for £40,000 the tall Swede agreed to join PSV the following summer. But first he had to put in his military service and while he was doing so, Feyenoord and Ajax made offers. So did Nantes of France, whose general manager, Robert Budzinski, had been impressed with Edstroem in a World Cup tie with Austria.

To all of them Edstroem's reply was the same: "I have given PSV my word." And in August 1973 he moved to Holland. Not to the Holland the tourists know, but to Eindhoven, the industrial town made world famous as headquarters of the vast Philips electrics empire. The influence extends even to football, for PSV is nothing more than the Philips Sport Vereiniging — Philips sports club.

Not that PSV have had money lavished upon them, though they do boast one of Europe's best floodlighting systems for their 27,000-capacity stadium. But then, they are not poor either. They could afford the Edstroems, the van der Kerkhofs, and men like Rijvers to organise them.

Rijvers came from Breda originally, and returned there after a playing career which took him to France and Saint-Etienne, where he played centre or inside forward. When it was all over he returned, set up a shop in his home town and became assistant trainer to Tilburg. Then, in 1965, came his big break when he took over Twente Enschede.

With great perception he turned Twente into a team able to rival Ajax and Feyenoord and give a good account of themselves in Europe. But when the chance came to move to PSV he couldn't resist.

The PSV potential was greater. As he said: "The difference between us and Twente is that we have much more money."

He felt he could build in the same way, but that the club would be able to afford the success he hoped to achieve, and maintain it without worrying about selling a star each year to balance the books.

PSV had been champions of Holland in 1929, 1935, 1951 and 1963, and, despite not being champions at the time, were one of the founder competitors of the Champions' Cup in 1955-56. They had won the Dutch Cup in 1954 and would win it again in 1974, with Edstroem in their team.

And already, at 22, he was a player with a big reputation. After all, when he left Sweden he was the league's top scorer and Atvidaberg were well on the way to the championship again. Then, he had barely been with PSV a few months before he was called into the Europe team to play South America in the "World Day of Football" match in Barcelona.

In the Cup Ajax went down to PSV in the semi-finals with Edstroem causing havoc in the air, and in the final NAC Breda were beaten by a record 6-0. In the League PSV were equal top scorers with Feyenoord.

Swedish t
is maintai

Ralf Edstroem of Sweden (right) pictured with Rudi Krol of Holland during a World Cup game.

tradition ned...

by Keir Radnedge

the champions. Edstroem hit 19, but they finished fourth.

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
34	20	9	5	96	40	49

But season 73-74 wasn't yet over for Edstroem. There were still the World Cup Finals to come and he — already acclaimed as the best Swede in the air since Nordahl — was the major star of the party bound for West Germany. Not that getting this far had been easy.

Edstroem missed the opening 0-0 home draw with Hungary and the 2-0 defeat in Austria. But he hit three goals in the 7-0 thrashing of Malta and in the 3-3 draw with Hungary made the first goal and scored the final equaliser with a beautiful header 14 minutes from the end.

Play-off

Sweden then beat Austria 3-2, with Sandberg getting the winner from an Edstroem corner, and won 2-1 in Malta to qualify for a play-off and a 2-1 victory over Austria.

Edstroem went to West Germany having played barely more than a dozen internationals, yet in those games he had scored nine and made the final pass for 10 of Sweden's 33 goals.

Before the finals he came in for some criticism for snipers in Sweden who thought he needed his long hair trimmed, but their voices were drowned in the chorus of admiration which soon arose.

Sweden had been drawn in group three. They drew 0-0 with Bulgaria and Holland and assured their place in the second round when two-goal Edstroem led them to a 3-0 victory over Uruguay.

The going got tougher now of course, but still the Swedes fought bravely. They were unlucky to lose 1-0 to Poland when Staffan Tapper missed a penalty, and were in fact a goal up on West Germany after 26 minutes before going down 4-2 in Düsseldorf.

The scorer of that shock first goal was Edstroem, and he hit the opener again as Sweden beat Yugoslavia 2-1 in their last match.

They had failed to take any of the prizes, but Edstroem was now a world star. Not only had he displayed his ability in the air, but he had astonished everyone with his deft skill on the ground. Alfredo di Stefano — who ought to know his centre-forwards — described him as the outstanding player in the finals.

Later in the year he was named again as Swedish footballer of the year. No player had ever won the award twice.

Nothing it seemed could go wrong for him, and though PSV went out of the Cup in the third round, losing 3-2 to bottom of the table Wageningen, in the league they remained unbeaten until January 26, 1975 when, without Edstroem, suffering from a broken nose, they lost 2-1 to Rijvers's old club, Twente. Even PSV's goal that day was scored by Twente — an own goal by former Ajax midfielder, Arnold Muhren.

That marvellous run of 18 games without defeat included a 3-2 victory over Feyenoord which was PSV's first in Rotterdam for 15 years!

But that Twente defeat burst a bubble. By early April, though they had lost only once more, PSV had merely a one-point lead over Feyenoord and a sign of their ebbing confidence was the suprising ease with which Dynamo Kiev beat them 3-0 in the Cup-winners' Cup semi-final first leg in the Ukraine.

PSV had gone this far impressively. In the first round they beat Ards 10-0, and 4-1 then Gwardia Warsaw 5-1 (away!) and 3-0, and in the quarter finals, after being held 0-0 at home by Benfica, won 2-1 away.

Edstroem had a mixed time. In the first leg against Ards he had a hand in five goals and scored another and then got one as well in the return. But injury kept him out of the games with Gwardia and in the dramatic second leg with Benfica in Lisbon he had to be substituted in the 14th minute, just after PSV had gone ahead.

And it was fear of a new injury which prompted a storm when, on the eve of the first leg with Kiev, Edstroem was called up by Sweden for a friendly the following week with Scotland.

Edstroem and team-mate Nordqvist were both named in the team, but tried to wriggle out by protesting that the West German-based Ronnie Hellstroem and Sandberg hadn't been picked.

Refuse

That's nothing to do with it, Edstroem was politely told. Sweden's agreement with PSV meant they could call on him for *any* six internationals a year they chose.

Edstroem and Ericsson hadn't been on the same side for some time. At the start of 1975 Edstroem had joined the other exiles threatening to refuse to play unless the Swedish FA revised their pay and expenses to make sure they didn't lose out financially in playing internationals.

Now came this trouble over the Scotland game, clashing as it did with a league match between PSV and Twente, which Edstroem could have cruised through. Yet not only did Edstroem happily escape injury, he also set up the Swedish goal in the 1-1 draw with a lob over the defence for Thomas Sjoeberg to jab home.

Now Edstroem went back to PSV determined to allow no more distractions. A week after the Scotland game he scored both goals as PSV beat Kiev 2-1 in the Cup-winners' Cup return. Admittedly it wasn't enough to make the final, but it was a demonstration that the team were back to form and Edstroem had rarely looked sharper than when he hit in first a Rene van der Kerkhof cross, then won the game with a later header.

The next Sunday PSV went to Amsterdam to beat third-placed Ajax 4-2. Victory was easier that it sounds. After Edstroem scored the first goal PSV took charge and Ajax only made the scoreline respectable with two goals in the last nine minutes.

● *Continued on page 50*

AFRICAN CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP
Paul Wade reports...from Algiers

MOULOUDIA CHALIA WIN INVITE TO REAL MADRID

MOULOUDIA CHALIA of Algiers are the new champion club of Africa. MCA wrested the title away from the holders, Hafia of Conakry, on December 18 in an exciting but messy second leg Cup tie in the fabulous 5th of July Stadium which dominates the fine Olympic complex in the hills above the Algerian capital.

Trailing 3-0 after the first leg in Guinea, the smaller Algerians attacked for all they were worth throughout the match. Their full backs set up attacks down the wings by Draoui and Betrouni that always seemed to prise open a rather panicky defence but Busri at centre forward never got behind the big central defender Morcire and for 20 minutes the Guineans were happy to thump the ball away high into the night sky.

They also used delaying tactics, wasting time on throw-ins and goalkicks whenever possible but the excellent Tunisian referee Tawfik Ghayaza did not hesitate to use his yellow card three times in the first half to show his displeasure.

But then an aimless goalkick was picked up in the centre circle by Bencheickh who pushed a quick ball to the MCA captain Bachi who squirmed past a couple of greenshirted defenders before letting fly 30 metres out for a superb goal that lifted the 80,000 crowd from its torpor.

Passing

But no further score was added before halftime as the players found their passing going astray on the Tartan artificial surface that was slick after a torrential downpour minutes before the kickoff.

Although the Guinean attack of Bengaly Sylla, Petit Sory, Njolea and Jansky is one of the most feared in Africa, they rarely combined well and the Algerian defence had little trouble in holding them.

The over-confidence of the Guineans and their lethargy was contrary to all expectations as in two previous finals (in 1972 and 1975) they had shocked rivals by attacking away from home — and winning.

In the second half there were ten golden minutes of Hafia with all their ability paraded for us to see — Papa Camara in midfield unleashed his wingers as the two central strikers jockeyed about in the penalty area. But just as suddenly as the Guineans got it all together, they lost it and a quickly taken freekick in the centre circle sent Busri arrowing through the middle when he was pulled down by the goalkeeper Sylla Bernard on the penalty spot.

The ref was right up with the play and the crowd was beside itself as skipper Bachi took the kick. But his shot was put waist high and to the right of the goalkeeper who had also dived to the right and it looked as if the home side had thrown it away and that the Guineans would win the Kwame Nkrumah Cup for the third time and therefore be able to keep it.

Then the man whom they subsequently called "l'homme de la derniere minute" struck twice. Omar, Betrouni on the right wing had always had the beating of Diarra Djibrill and with fifteen minutes to go he whipped past him and banged in a long hopeful centre.

The ball seemed to float for an age before going over the arms of the despairing Hafia keeper and directly in to the far corner of the net. A freak goal, but a deserved one on the run of play and the crowd recalled how Betrouni had snatched victory from the French in the final of the Mediterranean Games soccer tournament in 1975.

Luckily his team mates did, too, and they kept sliding the ball out to his wing where he gave the Guineans all sorts of problems. With 90 seconds left on my watch he again pushed the ball past the full back and sprinted after it, but instead of crossing he cut in towards goal and hammered in a shot that cannoned off Bernard's hands into the net.

The stadium erupted into a festival of celebration with thousands of newspapers, rolled up to make torches, blazing away in upheld arms. The aggregate score was 3-3 and we went in to a penalty kicking contest to decide the 1976 African Cup. But it was already over as the Guineans' shoulders slumped with disbelief at how quickly they'd thrown their lead away.

Three of their four penalty attempts were weak and failed. The Algerians drilled three out of three past Bernard and the contest was over as the crowd swarmed on to the pitch and lifted the players shoulder high to receive the Cup from President Boumedienne.

With an average age of 22, the Algerians seem to have a good, established side that could dominate African soccer for years. Certainly, in entering a team for the first time ever they showed their strength of character by playing home and away matches against Benghazi of Libya, El Ahly of Cairo, Luo Union of Kenya and Enugu Rangers of Nigeria as well as Hafia of Conakry.

Previous winners of the African Cup:

1964	Oryx Douala of the Cameroons
1965	no competition
1966	Stade d'Abidjan of the Ivory Coast
1967	Engelbert Lumumbashi of Zaire (now known as Mazembe)
1968	Englebert Lumumbashi of Zaire
1969	Ismail of Egypt
1970	Asante Kotoko of Ghana
1971	Canon of Yaounde of the Cameroons
1972	Hafia of Guinea
1973	Vita of Zaire
1974	CARA of the Congo
1975	Hafia of Guinea
1976	Mouloudia Chalia of Algeria

Outings

The thousands of miles travelled make Cardiff City's forays to the Soviet Union look like weekend outings, especially when you consider that most travel in Africa is "vertical". To get to Kenya from Algiers requires a flight via London; to get to Guinea, MCA went via Togo, Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Vast distances and huge strains for amateur players.

We will get a chance of seeing how good a side MCA is in March, when Real Madrid host a tournament to celebrate their 75th anniversary. As well as the African champions, a representative from Iran and Latin America is expected to participate.

MCA— Ait Mohoub; Zemmour, Mahyouz, Zenir, Azzouz; Bachta and Bencheick; Betrouni, Bachi (capt), Busri, Draoui.

HAFIA — Sylla Bernard; Jacob Bangoura, Cherif Souleyman, Morcire, Diarra Djibrill; Ismael 'Eusebio' and Papa Camara; Bengaly Sylla, Pety Sory, Njolea, Jansky.

by PAUL GARDNER

LAST MONTH, on January 12, the North American Soccer League held its sixth annual college draft. Sixth annual *what?* you ask. And well you might, for this is a rather specialised piece of sporting Americana, unheard of in the rest of the world.

The college draft. It happens in baseball and in basketball and in grid-football. And for the past six years it's been happening in soccer. Basically, the draft is the result of an agreement between professional clubs not to tamper with or approach college athletes. American colleges are bulging with first-rate basketball and grid-football players, many of them good enough to play as professionals. Were they to sign as pros, however, that would end their college sport careers. So the clubs agree: no talking to college players until they have played their final college game.

At which point one might imagine a most horrendous free-for-all as the clubs swoop down to outbid each other and grab the prizes they have been denied for so long. That doesn't happen, and it doesn't happen because of the draft.

The pro clubs draw up a list of all the players in their sport who have completed their college careers. The clubs are then allowed to choose who they want from the list, but only in a nice gentlemanly and orderly fashion.

The order of choice is based on the previous season's pro league table turned upside down. Thus the team that finished bottom (theoretically the worst team in the country) gets the first pick in the draft (which, theoretically again, gives them the best college player in the country).

The next to bottom finisher (remember, there is no promotion and relegation in the American pro leagues) gets the second choice, and so it goes on through the list until all the clubs have chosen. Then another round is started. The last team to pick in each round is the previous season's champion team.

It is a rather neat way of maintaining equality among the teams of the league. As to how all this is accomplished, it relies totally on that most American of inventions, the telephone.

* * *

THE SCENE is the conference room at the North American Soccer League offices in New York City. At one end of the room sits Commissioner Phil Woosnam looking, as is his wont, slightly tense and fiddling with his spectacles. Behind him, the wall is covered with a large display board, down one side of which are listed the names of the NASL teams.

On the desk in front of him there is a small plastic box, one of the telephone company's gifts to civilisation, the Speakaphone. Into this box Woosnam speaks, and from it emerge 17 different voices from 17 different cities, representing the NASL's American clubs. (The Canadian clubs, Vancouver and Toronto, are not participating while the Boston club — whose owner is in all sorts of financial and legal trouble — has been "suspended".)

Facing Woosnam is a cluster of journalists, even a cameraman. We are waiting, and Woosnam is showing increasing signs of irritation. It is ten past one, and things should have started at one.

The bouncy operator, whose voice keeps coming in loud and clear from the box, can't make contact with San Antonio. Someone is tying up the line there, she says — "You want to start without him?" "No, we can't," says Woosnam. Another three minutes and the operator bounces up again, "OK, we got him, everyone is on."

Woosnam leans forward to speak into the box. "Good afternoon, good morning . . . and *aloha!*" It is, you see, still a.m. on the West Coast, and the NASL does now have a club in Hawaii. There follows a roll-call to make sure everyone is there; the names of the cities are read off, the replies come quickly, just the word "Yes!" uttered at all levels from squeaky tenor to rumbling basso.

"You will be allowed three minutes to make your pick in the first round, one minute in the following rounds," announces Woosnam, and away we go.

Members of the New York media are kept busy as NASL Commissioner Phil Woosnam (seated at the head of the table) conducts the 1977 North American Soccer League College Draft from league headquarters in New York.

THE COLLEGE DRAFT

The worst team in the NASL last season was the St. Louis Stars, so they should be making the first pick. Except that, less than 24 hours ago they did a deal with the Dallas Tornado, receiving a Dallas player and giving in return some cash and the right to pick first in the draft.

So it is Dallas that have the first choice. On comes their GM Dick Berg, very faint (shouts of "Speak up Dick!" from various voices rise out of the box) to announce that Dallas is choosing Glenn Myernick from Hartwick College. No surprise here, Myernick is generally agreed to be the best college player in the country.

Berg is still going . . . "born December 29, 1954, attended Trenton High School, New Jersey . . ." and on he goes, detailing Myernick's career. A voice suggests "Your three minutes is up, Dick" but Berg surges relentlessly on . . . "College player of the year 1976, two-time All-American . . ." A more decisive interruption: "We don't need all this," immediately followed by an eager chorus of "No, no, no" from all over the country.

Dick Berg shuts up, and on come the Fort Lauderdale Strikers (who last season were the Miami Toros) to make their choice. From then on things go pretty smoothly, with only some minor hitches: Eddie Firmani of Tampa can't spell the name of one of his picks, Don Paul of Hawaii selects a player who already belongs to a Canadian club, the voice from Chicago is almost inaudible ("I can't get any closer without getting inside the thing" it squeaks indignantly).

As the selections are made the names are duly pinned up on the board behind Woosnam, who is leaning over the Speakaphone like a broody hen. In 15 minutes the first round is over and 19 college players have been selected; three more rounds to go. Short little telegramatic messages flash over the country through the web of wires . . . "The Cosmos 4th round choice is Tom Lang, midfielder

As the selections are made the names are duly pinned up on the board behind Woosnam, who is leaning over the Speakaphone like a broody hen. In 15 minutes the first round is over and 19 college players have been selected; three more rounds to go. Short little telegramatic messages flash over the country through the web of wires . . . "Las Vegas selects Dave Bragg, goalkeeper, Temple University" . . . "The Cosmos 4th round choice is Tom Lang, midfielder, Adelphi

● Continued on page 44

ERIC BATTY QUESTIONS THE VALIDITY OF THE EUROPEAN PLAYER POLL

FOR THE second time, having first taken the award in 1972, Franz Beckenbauer has been voted 'European Footballer of the Year' by France Football's correspondents from all over the world.

In second place this time is Robbie Rensenbrink of RSC Anderlecht while Ivo Viktor, the Czech goalkeeper who helped his country win the European championship in Yugoslavia last spring is third.

Rensenbrink of course helped Anderlecht beat West Ham in the final of the European Cupwinners Cup, which means that the honours are 'fairly' spread out.

While not wishing to knock Beckenbauer, who is a quite magnificent player and thoroughly deserving of the honour, it is the qualifications of those asked to vote that bothers me, that and the fact that few of them really see much international football.

How many of the top teams and players were seen in 1976 for example by France Football's correspondents in Dublin, Luxembourg, Oslo and Istanbul? Again, how many of their correspondents actually earn their living from football? Quite a few of them I know personally and there are several eligible voters work for radio and TV on general news etc., and a few more who although full time journalists, work as general newsmen and not specialist writers.

Qualify

To qualify as a correspondent for FF, it is not necessary to be a football writer. The most important qualification is being able to speak and write in French.

But my biggest criticism of FF's award is the undue influence that their contributors (voters) place on the World Cup, European Cup Final and European championships, all of which are widely screened on TV and therefore seen by them. But how much other international football do they see?

Back in the early days for example, Alfredo Di Stefano won the award in 1957 and again in 1959. In both these years he starred for Real Madrid in the European Cup final. But in 1958, although Di Stefano was still quite the best player in Europe, he not only failed to get the award but wasn't even in the first three.

That year the final placings were: 1. Raymond Kopa (France), 2. Helmut Rahn (West Germany) and 3. Just Fontaine (France . . . and they all figured prominently in the World Cup staged that year in Sweden.

By coincidence, in 1958 I saw the European Cup Final and was also in Sweden for the World Cup. And in Brussels, where Real Madrid beat AC Milan 3-2 to win the European Cup, Kopa had a stinker. In fact, if Di Stefano hadn't played the game of his life, AC Milan with Juan Schiaffino, Nils Liedholm and the Argentinians Grillo and Cuchiaroni in their attack would have taken Madrid to the cleaners.

As it was they led twice and played brilliantly, but they were up against Di Stefano at his greatest, kicking a certain goal off his own line with the goalkeeper beaten, getting an equalising goal himself and laying on the other two to give Madrid a 3-2 victory . . . and much more than that, while performing brilliantly himself, he was playing with another ten men, who, apart from Jose Santamaria at centre back, were well below their best.

Unfortunately for Di Stefano, he didn't play in the World Cup in Sweden. But though Raymond Kopa had a fine World Cup and Fontaine was the highest scorer with 13 goals, the best player (apart from Di Stefano) was Nils Liedholm whom I saw several times that season for AC Milan and also saw a few times in Sweden.

Clearly the 'voters' put the World Cup first, just as they appear to put the European championship first in a year when the finals are staged. Thus it was that Josef Masopust (Dukla and Czechoslovakia) won the award in 1962 when he helped the Czechs reach the World Cup Final . . . and Bobby Charlton got it in 1966 when England took the World Cup. In 1970 it was Gerd Muller who topped the poll, but as in 1962 and bearing in mind this is the European award, Brazil won the World Cup in both years, 1962 and 1970.

For the 1972 award, it was obviously the European championship that influenced the poll. West Germany won the title in fine style and the top three men in FF's election were all West Germans . . . 1. Franz Beckenbauer, 2. Gerd Muller and 3. Gunter Netzer.

An odd year was 1975 with Oleg Blokhin taking the golden award — this presumably because he was the star of the Dynamo Kiev team that beat a very bad Ferencvaros side in the European Cup winners Cup final.

About Blokhin (who is a very useful player) and Dynamo Kiev I was sceptical, wanting to see both in action against a better side than the Hungarians depleted team that played in Basle. With the Russians taking their customary break from November to April at the end of that year, it later became clear that Dynamo were no super team, and Blokhin was not the giant he had appeared. Alas, even if anyone had second thoughts, he had already been proclaimed king.

Other football papers around Europe hold similar polls; in fact I am usually invited to vote in one or two myself. But the award put up by *France Football* is regarded as the 'official one'.

Some years ago, when Gabriel Hanot was alive and bossing FF, that paper had some right to regard itself as the top dog. It was in fact M. Hanot whose brainchild it was to launch the European Cup, and even against initial English opposition it became, quite rightly, the most important club competition and most highly prized trophy in Europe.

But these days, FF falls far below the high standards set by M. Hanot.

For a paper claiming to have their prestige, it's a bit surprising to know that several of their 'foreign correspondents' actually live in Paris and write their copy after listening on Sunday evenings to radio Bucharest or radio Budapest, broadcasting in their native tongues. It just isn't good enough for a paper like FF.

Credentials of voters in doubt

Another French magazine has recently tried to get in on the prestige act. This is a monthly glossy called *Onze*, which for the benefit of those who didn't do French at school means simply . . . eleven.

Their idea was to poll for a European team, an old idea which, as I said before is one of the things I do for example for a couple of foreign football magazines. I suspect that *Onze* gave votes to their readers, for their final team includes no less than three players from St. Etienne, the French champions: goalkeeper Ivan Curkovic, centre back Oswaldo Piazza and Dominique Rocheteau.

There were some more equally bizarre choices in the *Onze* 11, including Kevin Keegan in midfield. Also amongst the best XI were Jupp Kapellman of Bayern Munchen . . . and biggest joke of all was the mention of Czech inside forward Antonin Panenka who was listed under defensive midfield players when in fact he is a very fine attacking player, often figuring at centre forward for his club Bohemians (of Prague).

Ken Goldman talks to the man Fulham dismissed

'PURE GOLD' STOCK

Alec Stock, pictured leaving Craven Cottage after his departure.

SO FULHAM and Alec Stock have parted company. This, one feels, in historical terms will be seen as a great loss to the Cottagers, not because Bobby Campbell, the new manager, is not a top line coach and a charming companion, for he is both of these things, but because Alec Stock is unique in football and by a term that he frequently uses, is "pure gold".

Stock, until he left Fulham, was the oldest serving manager in the Football League and was not without experience in non-league football as both player and manager with Yeovil Town. He in fact served as a manager firstly with Yeovil moving on to Leyton Orient as they were then called in 1949 and remained there until 1958 despite a short spell with Arsenal as an assistant.

In 1958 again Stock underwent a short spell with another club — this time AS Roma — but quickly returned to London with Queens Park Rangers staying there for a period of almost 10 years. He moved on again after some unhappy differences to Luton Town where his flair in the transfer market was put to probably its best use.

He finally moved back to London again with Fulham in 1972. During that period of management with various clubs the honours were never far away. He took Orient to the Division Three championship in 1956, Queens Park Rangers to the same championship in 1967 and the same year Rangers annexed the League Cup Trophy at the first Wembley final in that competition.

Rangers gained promotion to Division One in 1970 and Fulham were runners-up in the FA Cup in 1975. Let it not be forgotten the genial Alec was a player with both Charlton Athletic and Queens Park Rangers just before and after the war before moving on to Yeovil to finish his playing career.

This fund of experience left him, together with his usual bland demeanour, as one of the elder statesmen of the game.

I spoke to him shortly before the departure from Craven Cottage and we discussed a variety of matters. His answers were as usual full and frank and bear the weight of one who is both dedicated to soccer and whose experiences have given him a flowery philosophy on life.

I asked him first about the job of being a manager and he replied: "It is a fascinating and intriguing job but one in which you must be part realist and part idealist. When you take over a club everyone wishes you good luck but you can't do much with that. On the other hand it helps to be a dreamer and maintain that you will win everything each season and believe in that as a fact."

I queried the part that coaches had had to play in his managerial career and he replied: "It has been my invariable practice to employ top coaches and give them a free rein which means I do not go out and destroy their confidence. I try to provide my coach with good players and a happy environment and whilst naturally I retained the overall responsibility I have always tried to run my clubs over "a cup of tea". I want talented people who do their jobs well and are not frightened to express their real feelings".

I remarked that over the years he had been particularly astute in the transfer market and to my surprise he countered that he considered them "undesirable because if you already have the players, you do not want to part with them. Good players are what I term "pure gold" and you are no genius if you sell pure gold. The aim is always on your mind to try to give your club financial stability and build a strong team. The pointers to remember are to be patient, buy well and do not buy hurriedly for it is easy to put out 11 players but far better to field a team."

During the course of our conversation one of the topics, in hindsight, took a prophetic turn since while discussing contractual obligations between manager and club Stock revealed that he considered the question of how long a manager could go on with a particular club. "It is an interesting topic, for I have always believed that managers' contracts should be for about three to five years. If you are at a club longer than that you yourself need a stimulus which often only new players or new surroundings can provide.

"Certainly these what I might call longer short term contracts should be well paid. I feel it is difficult as a football manager to have ambitions other than in relation to what you can achieve with and at your own club. You always must remember your own limitations and grieve when you see some of the best and most experienced managers losing their jobs. Personally, I want my club to be placed on a firm financial footing, playing well and giving enjoyment to those who watch them."

We finished on a nostalgic note, conversing about changes in the game and Alec sadly confessed to being a great believer in tradition. "I hate to see the way that loyalties have disappeared and the game has suffered as a result. The loyalties of and to spectators have drifted and surely in this respect it must be wrong for clubs to change their traditional colours and throw away part of their heritage. After all clubs belong to the supporters and all the officials at a club are merely custodians."

I both know and like Bobby Campbell and having seen him work consider him to be one of the best coaches in the country. But Malcolm Alison and Joe Mercer achieved much more together than Alison achieved alone and the same applies to Brian Clough and Peter Taylor as a pair. Perhaps Fulham as the months progress will consider that the calm dignified and gentlemanly assurance which Alec Stock was able to purvey coupled with the flair and application of Bobby Campbell would have served them in better stead rather than to part with the former and throw the latter into the deep end at a time when Fulham were in danger of sinking, despite the brilliance but sometimes evanescence of such as Best, Marsh and Moore.

WORLD CLU
FOR BAYERN

BAYERN MUNICH, the European Cup holders, have now also become the world club champions. Their 2-0 aggregate victory over Cruzeiro of Belo Horizonte (Brazil) gave them the trophy for which they did not bother to compete in the last two seasons. Although the first leg staged in Munich attracted only 20,000 spectators, mainly because of wretched weather conditions (snow, frost and the pitch was an ice rink!) the Bavarians just about covered their expenses.

The two late goals scored by Gerd Muller and Jupp Kapellmann, proved the all important "insurance" for the return in Brazil just before Christmas. A giant crowd of 114,000 saw Bayern hold the South American champions to a 0-0 draw thanks to a superlative display by their captain Franz Beckenbauer and a masterly performance by goalkeeper Sepp Maier, who was rated the best man on the field.

The club management showed itself more than generous, considering the poor gate at home with receipts of £45,000. Every Bayern player received a win bonus of £2,500. Obviously Bayern as world champions will now be able to demand higher fees for the numerous friendly matches they play all round the world during the year to boost their finances.

How the club are raking in the cash can be gauged from the fact that they just paid out a staggering £600,000 for last year's outstanding corporation tax! An application to the Treasury to use some of that money for the erection of a public sports centre in Munich was rejected!

Replacements

The club must earn as much as possible now, for there are still no adequate replacements to be found anywhere for their stalwarts like Beckenbauer, Maier and Muller who are all over 30. When they eventually retire, then Bayern will never be the same again.

How much Bayern rely on Beckenbauer was shown recently in a home match against lowly Eintracht Frankfurt which they lost 0-3, Beckenbauer being absent through a groin strain, for the 12th time missing a *Bundesliga* match. The lack of adequate reserves is certainly a problem worrying many leading German clubs. In the absence of reserve team football very few top players are prepared to join a club which has so many established internationals, like Bayern, to be condemned to sitting out almost every match on the reserve bench.

Bayern lost the crucial championship match to Borussia Mönchengladbach by 0-1 and thus, at the half way mark, they fell five points behind the title holders and stayed in third place. Borussia recovered from their first defeat of the season (1-4 at Hamburg), but injury-weakened they crashed later to Karlsruher SC by 0-4, before the aforementioned win against Bayern. Their injury problems continued to mount following operations on captain Berti Vogts (groin trouble) and striker Jupp Heynckes (cartilage). The latter will be out of action for some weeks.

It is a measure of the champions' strength, that they beat Bayern without four key men — Vogts, Heynckes, Danner (injured) and Wittkamp (suspended). Certainly Bayern would not have survived such a loss of several top players. Borussia will most likely retain the title thanks largely to several highly talented youngsters in reserve.

Congratulated

Manager Udo Lattek spoke freely at the lengthy press conference when he was asked a series of questions relating mostly to the title race. To the question "did any of the Bayern players (Lattek was their team boss for over four years), congratulate you on your victory?" — Lattek replied: "No, but I didn't expect it. This defeat has hit Bayern very badly, in any case they had little time after the match, for their 'plane was waiting".

Question: Will the advantage of four points be enough to keep the title?

Answer: "We have only reached the half way stage, but — with this attitude and fighting spirit we should win the championship again."

Q: Which are your principal rivals for the crown?

A: "Firstly Bayern Munich, less so Eintracht Brunswick. Cologne and Hamburger SV would have to perform brilliantly to catch up with us."

Q: What impressed you most about your under-strength team in that 1-0 win?

A: "The technically marvellous performance. I knew that the team will fight to make up for the loss of Vogts, Heynckes, Danner and Wittkamp. The effort and stamina were expected, we have even budgeted for a point, but not for a win."

Q: Who will be relegated?

A: "Rotweiss Essen grabbed two vital points and Saarbrucken one away. Perhaps a team will go down that no one has as yet mentioned. This season has really been quite crazy".

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B TITLE MUNICH

WEST GERMAN Newsletter by Arthur Rotmil

Q: What will the champions be doing now till the restart on January 15?

A: "Until the 22 December we are staying on the Canary Isles. The trip is being financed out of the win bonus for beating Cologne. We shall probably play a couple of games at Las Palmas."

Q: Will Berti Vogts and Dietmar Danner take part?

A: "Danner hasn't recovered yet, but Berti is already in training."

Borussia will most likely lose their brilliant international, utility defender Rainer Bonhof. The 24-year-old World Cup star has already negotiated a contract with the top Spanish club CF Valencia, who will pay him a salary of nearly £90,000 a year. The German club will collect a transfer fee of £625,000. Bonhof intends to move after the World Cup finals in 1978.

In the match at Monchengladbach the Bayern 'keeper Sepp Maier proved once again what a great showman he is. First, before the kick-off during the warm-up, he saved shots by his colleagues with his knees, his head and even with an acrobatic overhead kick! The crowd who booed Bayern on taking the field, as has become customary outside Munich, burst into frenetic applause at Maier's clowning.

In the very last minute of the match as Bayern 0-1 down, forced a corner, Maier ran the length of the field and took up position in the opponents penalty area pointing to his head that he wanted a high cross! Unfortunately the ball landed with an opposing player and Maier much to the amusement of the fans had to scamper back to his goal. As he said after the final whistle: "It was our last chance and I thought — now, everything or nothing."

Positive

The most positive aspect of the season so far: the *Bundesliga* reports the highest crowds since the League was increased to 18 clubs in 1965. A total of 3,955,198 spectators watched the 152 matches. This means an average of 26,021 per game. Last year the figures were 3,800,629 for an average of 24,840 in the corresponding period.

Practically every club has reached its minimum necessary to break even. Champions Borussia Mg. with their small ground needing 34,500 to meet their costs, are below that mark, but are cashing in from the European Cup progress.

The best home gates were at promoted Borussia Dortmund with 45,704 spectators per match. This figure is well above the hoped for 20,000. The management of FC Cologne are also rubbing their hands over the average of 41,449 in their new stadium, after spending so many lean years in the old dismal "Radrennbahn". The next best crowds were registered at Hamburg with 41,103 per game, followed by Hertha Berlin 34,645; Bayern Munich 34,357 and Karlsruher SC 32,777.

At the other end of the scale, Rotweiss Essen attracted just 12,825; VfL Bochum 16,383; Fortuna Dusseldorf 17,592 and Kaiserslautern averaging 17,756.

The most negative facet of the season: For the first time in thirteen years of existence a *Bundesliga* match had to be abandoned because of crowd trouble. Actually the word "crowd" is more than misplaced, for it could only have been at most, three hooligans involved.

In the match Kaiserslautern — Fortuna Dusseldorf three small bottles were thrown on to the pitch. The fans were incensed over the refereeing of Herr Frickel from Munich, because he allegedly ignored some blatant fouls by the visitors who led 1-0, when the game was stopped in the 76th minute.

The German Federation (DFB) stepped in smartly and gave the match to Fortuna on a 2-0 forfeit. In addition, Kaiserslautern were fined £2,000 on account of "insufficient security arrangements". The club's president, the mayor of the city who was at the match, as well as the chief of police, signed a letter of protest to the DFB claiming that the referee had over-reacted and that there was no need to abandon the game. They pointed out that for 9,000 spectators they engaged 160 security men, 70 policemen, seven detectives and two police dogs.

Bayern Munich, with Sepp Maier and Franz Beckenbauer in the thick of things, defend their goal during last year's European Cup Final against St. Etienne.

News from ITALY by Keir Radnedge

Castellini clash spa

TO A large number of the *tifosi* Torino means just two names: Francesco Graziani and Paolino Pulici.

And these two strikers went on justifying their reputation with the two goals which beat Juventus in the Turin derby and put champions Torino back on top, the only unbeaten team in *Serie A*.

But it wasn't the mere result or even the fact that this was Torino's fourth successive derby victory, which kept the fans talking long after the final whistle.

Instead it was the collision between Torino goalkeeper Luciano Castellini and Juve midfielder Romeo Benetti, which saw Castellini carried off after 67 minutes with damaged knee ligaments.

The incident very nearly brought the teams to blows and temperatures still hadn't calmed at the end of the game when a few fans tried to attack Graziani and Patrizio Sala of Torino and Juve's Franco Causio for their part in the fracas.

The trouble came aftrer Castellini went down to grab a harmless shot from Roberto Bettega. Juve were one-down, and Benetti, following through, caught Castellini with his foot.

As the goalkeeper doubled up, so Patrizio Sala and Renato Zaccarelli made to go for Benetti, but fortunately referee Luigi Agnolin was quick to sort out the combatants.

Benetti explained afterwards: "Castellini beat me to the ball, but I'd already committed myself. I don't think I would have caught him, except that someone behind me pulled my arm and caught me off balance and that's why I hit Castellini as I did."

The "someone" was Torino skipper Claudio Sala, but it was brother Patrizio who was still the most upset later on.

"Benetti always goes in like that," he said, "He's no need to play like that at 30, when he's so much experience and an international name."

Benetti of course has a reputation as a hard man. Six years ago, with Milan, first Tomasini of Cagliari then Liguori of Bologna suffered long spells out of action after sharing tackles with him. Then only a year ago Renato Roffi of Cagliari suffered a leg fracture in collision with Benetti. So it was little wonder the Torino fans were jeering "Assassino," at him.

Some with long memories may even have recalled an incident in 1970-71, when the same Castellini tore one of his hands on Benetti's boots. But through it all the Torino goalkeeper remained admirably calm, and he at least did so again this time. Even Graziani has moved to excuse Benetti, saying: "When I see the goalkeeper has the ball I jump over him. Benetti should do the same, but at least I know from working with him in the national team that he's not malicious."

Giampiero Boniperti, Juve's president, was less concerned with the row over Benetti than the result and the Juve performance.

"The difference between the teams was that Torino played with all 11 men, and we had only about five putting everything into it," he snapped.

Juve were going through a rough patch, particularly after an incident the previous week when, as the players left the pitch at half-time in the game with Verona, opposing forward Gianfranco Zigoni collapsed. He and his colleagues claimed he had been hit by a bottle and, as if to prove it, he didn't appear for the second half.

Strangely, the league's disciplinary chairman, Alberto Barbe, didn't clamp down on Juve for a fan's misbehaviour, but commented that he couldn't find conclusive evidence to justify punishment. Instead he passed the case up the line for an investigation into whether Zigoni — once of Juventus — had been shamming.

The result of the game also suited Juventus. They won 2-1, albeit thanks to some neat saves from Dino Zoff who continues a remarkable run which has seen him miss only seven league games in 11 years.

Torino ran into crowd trouble as well a week or two later, during their 4-0 win at Catanzaro. This was an unpleasant game, with Roberto Mozzini (Torino) and Luigi Maldera (Catanzaro) sent off and a hail of plastic bottles including one of the linesmen among their direct hits.

This time, thought Dr Barbe, there was plenty of evidence and he banned Catanzaro from their own ground for three matches.

Catanzaro ran into more trouble at the start of the new year, losing 1-0 to tailenders Cesena at home — Cesena's first win of the season. Meanwhile, at the top of the table Torino — with 11 games played — had 20 points, one clear of tenacious Juventus with Napoli and Inter five points further back. The Cesena situation, from being disastrous, has long since descended into tragi-comedy.

First Giulio Corsini was sacked after three weeks of the season, and Paolo Ferrario appointed caretaker. Then the league ruled that Ferrario wasn't properly qualified to sit on the touchline as chief coach, so president Dino Manuzzi appointed Tom Rosati for his first spell in charge in *Serie A*.

He saw Cesena through just four games — all defeats — before being sacked in turn, and back came Ferrario. Cesena have just four points — all won under the former Milan striker — and the situation has become so absurd that no-one would be surprised if rumours proved correct and Edmondo Fabbri were appointed.

And Fabbri, Italy's national team manager for the 1966 World Cup debacle, has just been dismissed by second division Ternana!

Summons

Cesena came into the first division for the first time four years ago, incidentally. Their coach was none other than Gigi Radice, now of course doing very nicely thank you at Torino.

Radice learned his trade as a player at Milan under Nereo Rocco, who still sits at home in Trieste awaiting the summons to rescue the *Rossoneri*, who are eighth in the 16-team league and showing no signs of improvement.

President Vittorio Duina has tried several times to coax Rocco back to once again assume his official functions as presidential adviser. The first approach came just before the UEFA Cup visit to Bilbao (when Milan lost 4-1). Rocco accepted, but when coach Pippo Marchioro heard of the plan to bring Rocco to Spain on the official plane he protested it would look as if his authority were being undermined.

Accordingly Duina withdrew the invite. But only for a month. Then he asked Rocco to

DEATH OF MAESTRELLI

THEY SAY everything runs in threes, and there are few more superstitious people than footballers.

First, a few months ago, ex-Juventus goalkeeper Carlo Mattrel died in a car crash. Then former Torino skipper Giorgio Ferrini died after a brave fight following a brain haemorrhage.

Now Tommaso Maestrelli, the coach who guided an exuberent if quarrelsome Lazio to the 1974 championships, has died after two years in and out of hospital suffering from heart and stomach trouble.

Maestrelli, born in Pisa on October 7, 1922, played for Bari, Rome and Lucchese and wore the Azzurri jersey once, during the 1948 Olympics in London. He was an inside forward or wing half.

*His career as a trainer began with Bari in 1963 and he joined Lazio – then in **Serie B** in 1971 – after spells with Reggina, Reggio Calabria and Foggia. He brought Lazio straight back to the first division, took them to third place in 1973 and the championship next time round.*

But within a few months illness had started to take its toll, and though he took over the team in emergency again for a short spell last season, he already knew he was dying.

*Maestrelli won the coveted **Seminatore** d'Oro award in both 1968 with Foggia and 1974 with Lazio and such was the respect in which his players held him that Giorgio Chinaglia flew back to Rome from New York for the funeral.*

and Benetti
rks trouble

join the club's Christmas party at the Milanello training centre. This time it was Rocco who said No.

He preferred to stay out of the way, he said, because he realised his appearance might complicate matters.

That's a laugh! They couldn't *be* much more complicated. Duina has threatened to quit in February if Marchioro can't straighten the team out, and the players are being assailed by jeers of *"Serie B, Serie B,"* from the fans. That the *tifosi* keep coming at all at the moment is all to the personal credit of kingmaker Gianni Rivera who may have plenty of critics for his political games, but is in wonderful form on the pitch.

"When I go, San Siro will be empty," he said recently and no-one accused him of boasting. Milan's plight is that serious.

Conceded

The UEFA Cup defeat by Bilbao was a heavy blow — particularly coming as it did in San Siro through a carelessly-conceded late penalty which put the Basques through.

Albertino Bigon was the culprit twice over, first with a silly backpass which caught goalkeeper Ricky Albertosi in trouble on the edge of his area, then by pulling down Bilbao winger Chechu Rojo.

The Milan fans argued that there was no penalty, but it looked pretty clear to neutrals. It was also clear to a lot of Milan fans — above all to the mob who tried to pull Bigon's car apart as his wife drove the player from the stadium after the game.

Milan went down 2-1 to Foggia a few weeks after and this time Duina, even more annoyed, attacked some of the players as "parasites," accusing them of letting a few do the work for many.

The players were extremely annoyed and Duina apologised. But he must feel very unhappy. First because he was expecting to be only a figurehead president, and yet has been drawn into the web of intrigue in the club and accumulated much of the blame for the unrest.

At least Milan didn't let him down in the San Siro derby, holding on for a 1-1 draw with Internazionale who have problems of their own.

Involved

Coach Beppe Chiappella goes on moaning that he hasn't yet got the right team and he became involved in a minor war with the fans when he insisted on picking former Fiorentina midfielder Claudio Merlo week after week when it was clear Merlo was right out of form.

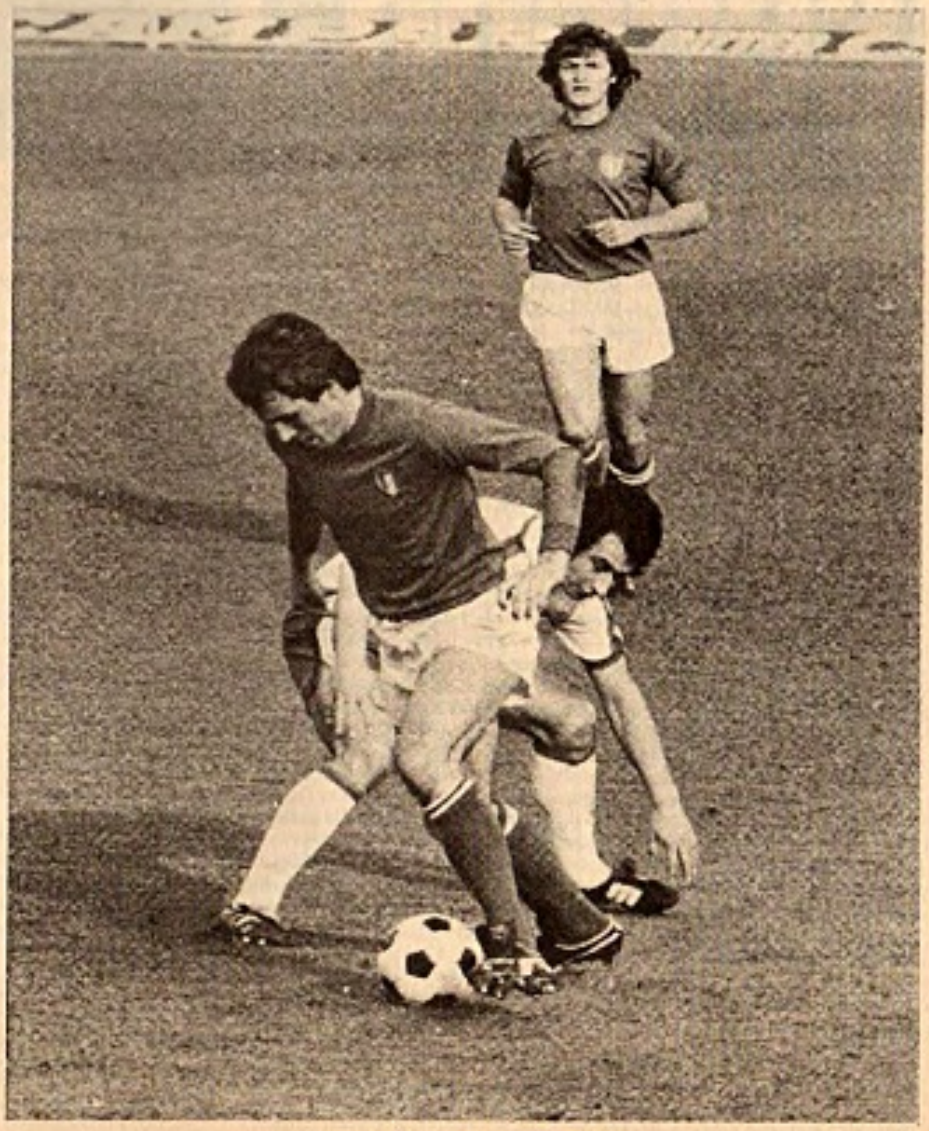
Finally Chiappella announced he would use Merlo only in away games, but changed his mind just before the home match with Napoli and was rewarded with a 3-2 win in which Merlo was the best player on the field. Adding spice to the match were earlier criticisms by Tarcisio Burgnich, once of Inter now with Napoli, that the trouble with Inter was the fans who could destroy a good player for no good reason.

One young man who has withstood some unpleasant treatment is winger Carlo Muraro, who scored two of the goals against Napoli in what was Sandro Mazzola's 400th league game, and then hit a hat-trick in a 3-0 win over Roma.

A former coach of both Inter and Roma is still in the news, by the way . . . Helenio Herrera is leaving Rimini after having his FA ban extended from December to the end of March because of his work with Rimini while under suspension.

At least Rimini won two games under him, which was more than before he became involved. Nevertheless they remain at the foot of the second division.

Yet at least they have so far been spared the problems which threatened third division Venezia and first division Sampdoria Genoa. Players in both clubs went on strike briefly . . . in protest at not being paid long overdue bonuses.



England versus Italy in Rome.

INTERNATIONAL MICROSCOPE

Fishing first ... football second !

compiled by ERIC BATTY

		P	W	D	L	F	A
Austria	4	0	0	4	3	13
Belgium	2	0	0	2	0	4
Bermuda	1	1	0	0	3	0
Bulgaria	6	0	2	4	5	18
Czechoslovakia	2	0	0	2	0	6
Denmark	69	16	10	43	83	195
Egypt (UAR)	1	0	1	0	1	1
Eire	10	1	3	6	15	26
England	4	0	0	4	2	20
Estonia	2	2	0	0	4	0
Finland	49	33	9	7	145	60
France	7	2	0	5	6	11
Germany, East	3	1	0	2	7	10
Germany, West	17	1	5	11	14	45
Guatemala	1	1	0	0	3	1
Holland	13	4	4	5	24	35
Hungary	6	1	0	5	3	24
Iceland	17	13	0	4	43	15
Ireland, North	2	1	0	1	2	4
Italy	3	0	0	3	3	9
Korea, North	1	1	0	0	3	0
Luxembourg	6	3	1	2	12	9
Malta	2	1	1	0	6	1
Mexico	3	0	1	2	1	7
Poland	10	2	2	6	18	40
Portugal	3	0	0	3	2	8
Romania	2	0	0	2	0	3
Saar	2	0	1	1	2	3
Siam	1	1	0	0	7	0
Scotland	5	1	1	3	7	13
Sweden	88	19	17	52	125	252
Switzerland	7	4	1	2	12	8
Turkey	3	1	0	2	5	3
U.S.A.	2	1	1	0	12	1
Uruguay	1	0	0	1	0	1
U.S.S.R.	4	0	2	2	4	10
Wales	1	0	0	1	1	2
Yugoslavia	8	1	1	6	10	22
Totals	368	112	63	193	593	880

BEING a big country with a small population, largely living on agriculture and fishing. Norway seems unlikely ever to be a real force in the hierarchy of international football.

Though many if not most of her young men play football, Norway's traditions are more closely linked with the sea than soccer, and the vast majority of her men spend at least their younger days at sea, one way or another.

However, there are other indications that football is growing in Norway. I recall spending some time deep in the Fjord country after seeing an international in Oslo. Far from the sea up a very long Fjord, I stayed in a hotel in a small village in which most buildings were built not of bricks but wood. Fishing was the only industry apart from tourism . . . and it was a very pretty spot.

The significant thing was that between the edge of the water and the point where the ground started sloping up towards the surrounding high mountains, there was no area big enough for a football pitch. But, and this is important, behind the tiny church there was a flat open space about 30 yards square and there someone had erected one goal!

I have also heard from the manager of a visiting team that his club played against a Norwegian club whose ground was perched high above the town on a plateau above a Fjord. Apparently this was the only suitable flat area for putting up a ground. In the last half hour before kick off, some ten thousand people climbed the paths like goat tracks, up the sheer face of the mini-mountain to watch the game.

Clearly there is no lack of enthusiasm for the game in Norway.

Significantly, however, in international terms the Norwegians have been very limited in terms of experience. As one of the weaker sides they are not widely sought after as opponents for friendly matches by the big fish and thus no fewer than 206 of her 368 matches played to date have been against Scandinavian neighbours, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Sweden and Denmark usually field experimental teams against Norway, using their foreign based professionals only for World Cup games and the like, but even so the Norwegian record against her neighbours is not good:

	P	W	D	L	F	A
Sweden	88	19	17	52	125	252
Denmark	69	16	10	43	83	195
Finland	49	33	9	7	145	60

Only against Finland do Norway have a positive record, as they do against Iceland who have recently joined in with regular fixtures against the Scandinavian countries. Even so, in their last game against Iceland, Norway were beaten 1-0, and in their last game against Finland the Norwegians also lost by 2-1.

Although Norway have won 112 matches the only real successes come down to three. Some five or six years ago they beat Yugoslavia in Oslo in a very surprising fashion for the Yugoslavs had been favourites to win their World Cup group. At the time, the Yugoslav players complained that they had been unable to sleep properly the night before the game — because it was daylight virtually all night.

However, Yugoslav critics of the time tended to disregard this excuse and seemed to prefer the theory that the Yugoslav players had been far too casual in their approach to the Norwegian amateurs and had been out drinking until very late in the night, just hours before the game.

This is unlikely to have been the reason for Norway's 2-1 win over Northern Ireland in the 1976 European championship however. To start with, the Irish had at that time already beaten Yugoslavia in Belfast and were very eager to do well. That win the Norwegians must have deserved.

Vital part

They also deserved credit for their recent 1-0 win over Switzerland for this was a game the Swiss had to win if they were to challenge Sweden for a place in the 1978 World Cup final stages.

That vital single goal was scored by Tom Lund, an inside forward from Lillestrom who is almost certainly the best player Norway has ever produced. He was offered no less than £50,000 in cash as a signing on fee by Ajax . . . when Cruyff left the club for Barcelona. But Lund preferred to stay in Lillestrom and has played a vital part in taking the club up from the Third Division to the First and topping that by winning the 1976 Norwegian championship and a place in next season's European Cup.

To date there has been only one Norwegian player who became a professional with a big club. This was Per Bredersen, an inside forward who, born in 1930 spent most of the fifties playing as a professional in Italy. He first signed for Lazio in 1952, later played for Udinese and AC Milan in 1956-57 and was a very useful player.

However, despite the presence of Tom Lund, Norway's record over the last five years is really no better than her overall figures. In this period she has played 33 games, winning 7, drawing 3 and losing 23 for a goals tally of 32 for and 63 against.

But there have been bright periods too, suggesting that with the right manager they could do considerably better. In 1974 they held East Germany to a 1-0 win, held Scotland to 2-1 . . . and had that proud 2-1 win over Northern Ireland. But the following year, 1975, Norway lost all the five games she played and clearly has a long way to go.

CANADA QUALIFY

report from COLIN JOSE

CHRISTMAS CAME three days early for Canada this year as a result of a resounding 3-0 win over the United States in a crucial World Cup play off game in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

With the two nations having finished tied on points and with the same goal difference in the Northern group in the CONCACAF zone, a play off was necessary to determine who would accompany Mexico into the second round. The Mexicans, the other team in the group, had qualified earlier by virtue of a superior goal difference even though they had lost and tied with the Canadians.

The play off game between Canada and the United States was expected to be a tight and bitterly fought affair after the U.S. had tied with the Canadians in Vancouver and beaten them 2-0 in Seattle, and to a certain extent this was the case despite the 3-0 scoreline.

Canadian coach Eckhard Krautzun started Zeljko Bilecki of the NASL champion Toronto Metros-Croatia in goal in place of regular goalkeeper Tony Chursky because Bilecki looked sharper in practice and his judgement was certainly justified as Bilecki, playing in his first international, had an outstanding game.

Krautzun also put young amateur player Gary Ayre to cover the dangerous U.S. striker Julie Veee and Ayre virtually played Veee out of the game. Ayre was a member of Canada's Olympic team.

Cleared

Canada took the lead after 21 minutes when after considerable U.S. pressure a long ball out of the defence found striker Brian Budd. Budd played it off to the wing and on the return his shot beat Mausser in the U.S. goal but was cleared off the line, a second shot was then cleared off the line before Budd finally put it into the net off a post.

Play swung from end to end with the taller and physically stronger U.S. team using long balls down the centre and down the wings, while the Canadians kept trying to slow the game down with a series of short passes. Canada lost their experienced midfielder John Kerr just before half time with a knee injury with Bob Bolitho another member of the Olympic team taking his place.

At the start of the second half the U.S. carried the game to Canada for about 20 minutes and for a while play got quite rough with both teams engaging in a lot of hard tackling. Several times Colombian referee Guillermo Ramirez had to intervene to restore order and finally U.S. defender Steve Pecher was sent off in the 60th minute for a foul on Canadian striker Victor Kodelja.

Pecher who was rookie of the year in the North American Soccer League with the Dallas Tornado had also been ejected in the first Canada—U.S. game in Vancouver, and in that case just as in this case the vital Canadian goal was scored with the United States down to 10 men.

In Vancouver Bob Bolitho got the equalising goal after Pecher had been sent off. This time Bobby Lenarduzzi scored Canada's second goal four minutes from time after a brilliant run by Wes McLeod to end any U.S. hopes of a last minute come back. Finally with one minute to go Bob Bolitho was pulled down just outside the U.S. penalty area. He took the free kick himself and blasted the ball into the top corner of the net well out of Arnold Mausser's reach.

Battle

For the United States the result was a disaster, relying as they were on a good World Cup performance to help to give the game yet another boost in the continuing battle to make soccer a major sport to rank alongside baseball, basketball and American football. It also ended any hopes of a repeat of the U.S. World Cup performance in 1950 when they did so well in the finals in Brazil.

On the other hand for the Canadians the victory was a justification of their two outstanding games against Mexico as compared to their previous inability to defeat the United States. Canada are now past the first round in the CONCACAF zone for the first time and with a team that is capable of making it all the way to Argentina.

The next round is scheduled to be played in either Canada or Mexico with the Mexicans having the edge because of the costs involved. Guatemala, El Salvador, Surinam and either Haiti or Cuba are the other teams involved and although many of these teams would prefer to play in Canada where height is not a factor the Canadians estimate that it would cost in the region of $500,000 to stage the tournament with very little return in gate receipts because as team manager John McMahon put it "Who in Canada is going to show up to see El Salvador play Surinam."

McMahon, who has been returned as team manager for the World Cup games after the Canadian government had discontinued his salary as manager of the Olympic team 18 months before the games began, has once again added that touch of professionalism to the team that was so lacking in the final preparations for the Olympics.

McMahon is hoping that the tournament can be played in Canada where the Canadians quite naturally would have a better chance of winning. However, with money very tight it is more likely that he will go to the organisational meeting with the proposal that the tournament be split into two halves with three teams playing in Mexico and three in Canada and the winners playing a home and away series to determine who goes to Argentina.

Experience was a factor in Canada's eventual triumph with fine goalkeeping from Tony Chursky and Zeljko Bilecki, while in defence Canada used Robert Iarusci of the Toronto Metros-Croatia at right back while Vancouver Whitecaps players Brian Robinson, Sam Lenarduzzi, Bobby Lenarduzzi and Bruce Wilson filled the other positions. Robinson and Sam Lenarduzzi between them have played in almost 60 internationals while Bobby Lenarduzzi played in almost 70Fourth Division games for Reading.

Spanned

In midfield Johnny Kerr's career has spanned five countries, Scotland, England, Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, while Jim Douglas and Bob Bolitho have played almost 50 internationals between them, and Gary Ayre has just topped the 20 mark.

The attack comprised a variety of players including Glen Johnson who at one time played some First Division soccer with West Bromwich Albion, Buzz Parsons with experience at Huddersfield and Ipswich plus 32 international appearances for Canada, Victor Kodelja, a potentially outstanding winger who played his club soccer with the San Antonio Thunder last season, Brian Budd who spent some time on trial with Ayr United plus Wes McLeod who at 18 years of age was outstanding against the Soviet Union during the Olympics.

By comparison the U.S. team were virtual newcomers to international soccer with only captain Al Trost having played in over 20 internationals.

Six killed in Haiti

TRAGEDY STRUCK the Haiti versus Cuba World Cup play off game in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on December 11, with six people being killed. The problem started after Cuba had equalised an earlier goal by Haiti and someone let off a firecracker. The crowd behind one goal panicked and knocked down a soldier with a machine gun, the gun then went off killing a boy and a girl in the crowd. Two people were then trampled to death and a third killed when he jumped over a wall. The soldier who started it all then shot himself outside the stadium.

Corinthians slip again

CORINTHIANS OF Sao Paulo, Brazil's most popular club, has now gone 23 years (since 1954) without a title following their 2-0 defeat against Internacional in Porto Alegre's Beira Mar Stadium in the Brazilian Cup final and it seems that while the enthusiasm of their thousands of fans has not been dampened, they have become an infuriated, dangerous mass.

Although playing away, there were at least as many Corinthian supporters in the capacity crowd as those from home club Internacional. But the "Paulistas" were again frustrated when Dario put the Porto Alegre club ahead after 30 minutes play and Valdomiro made it virtually safe with a second 12 minutes after half-time.

This second goal came from a free shot which bounced down from the crossbar and was caught by goalkeeper Tobias, but after consultation with a linesman, referee Jose Wright said the ball had crossed the line and violent protests from Corinthians players, which police had to break up, held up the game for 25 minutes. Corinthians fans were only stopped from joining in by the barriers (wire netting, etc.) surrounding the playing area.

Retain

Internacional, with experienced players such as Chilian international defender Figueroa and outstanding Brazilian stars Falcao and Marinho (who with Paulo Cesar, Cacapava, Lula and Valdomiro are in Brazil's 29-men World Cup squad) were hot favourites before the final to retain the Brazilian title which they won in the final against Cruzeiro the year before. They play a superior soccer to that of Corinthians, with better team work and individual ability and so it was in the final which they won deservedly.

In the previous Sunday's semi finals (with the two top teams of each of two nine team second round sections), Internacional beat Athletico Mineiro (from Bello Horizonte) 2-1 while Corinthians had beaten Fluminense at Rio's Maracana stadium (where 400,000 dollars gate money was taken) by 4-3 on post match penalties. The match, after 30 minutes extra time, had finished 1-1. Then a large section of the 60,000 fans who had travelled six hours (by road) from Sao Paulo in 700 buses, by car and air, ran wild and the results were lamentable.

Three days later the police was still not sure how many people had been killed, maimed — some merely for not joining in the festivities — and looted in the collective hysteria or suffered death and serious injury in car crashes on the road back to Sao Paulo.

Meanwhile, in Sao Paulo, some 150,000 failed to turn up for work on Monday, the Sao Paulo industrial federation asked employers not to take it off the absent fans' wages, 7,000 police and 1,500 patrol cars were in action to keep order as the fans streamed back to town and Brazil's mining and energy minister asked that the final should be transferred to Sao Paulo to avoid similar scenes, or at least save the two million litres of petrol which 70,000 fans would use up making a day-long journey to Porto Alegre.

The request was turned down, but the Brazilian Sports Confederation (CBD) has already decided that next year's national championship — to be played between a record 60 clubs (six more than last year) — will be decided in its semi final stage by home and away legs to make it fairer and to avoid a club losing its chance as a result of one bad game . . . and Corinthians will soon have another crack at a title. Both finalists will represent Brazil in the 1977 Libertadores Cup in which the Sao Paulo club will be taking part for the first time.

LUCKY BOCA

ARGENTINA'S NATIONAL championship reached the quarter final stage, after group play in four sections, with the following top two from each section qualifying:

Boca Juniors — only just and with luck after dropping to third place with two matches to go; Quilmes — the modest surprise team only promoted to the First Division this season; River Plate — with defender Passarella scoring vital goals to become the club's leading scorer this season with 23; Banfield — another small club playing good soccer under the coaching of former international center forward Adolfo Pedernera; Huracan — not playing up to their early season standard, but doing just enough to qualify easily with four current internationals in their side; Talleres Cordoba — the excellent provincial non-First Division team which went through the last 15 games unbeaten, but only just made it with a last minute equaliser after having two men sent off against Colon in Santa Fe. (Prior to this match, rival fans — Talleres had brought some 10,000 from Cordoba — clashed in the stadium, shots were heard and the result was two dead and numerous injured); Union from Santa Fe and Newell's Old Boys from Rosario were the other two qualifiers for knock-out play.

A curious incident was River Plate coach Angel Labruna's sending off for telling ball boys not to hurry to throw balls back on to the field in a vital match in which his team was defending a 1-0 lead. As he went off he claimed the ball boys were members of the club and he had a perfect right to order them to take it easy. (Some tactics!!!).

● In **Peru**, with three matches to go in the First Division championship, three clubs are within three points of the top — Sport Boys 36, Union Huaral 35, Juan Aurich 33 — and Universitario (31) and, with a match less, Alianza Lima and Leon de Huanuco (30) also have a mathematical chance. Sport Boys and Union Huaral were due to meet in the next match, but Sport Boys claims that the latter's stadium, 75 km from Lima (where Union is almost unbeatable) is not in condition to stage such an important match and they want it transferred to Lima — a tactical move since the stadium which, Sport Boys say, has only one exit and is falling to bits, has been used during the five years Union Huaral has been in the First Division without objections from other clubs.

● In **Venezuela**, Portuguesa are already professional league champions with two matches of the four team final round still to go.

● In **Uruguay**, referees gave up their threatened strike after receiving ample backing, but the FA was still without a president and committee (see last month's *WORLD SOCCER*) while Nacional won the major league — the second of Uruguay' two championships — by five points over Peñarol. The six best placed clubs in both championships — Nacional, Peñarol, Defensor, Danubio, Wanderers who were in the top six in both) and Huracan Buceo — are now engaged in a play-off to qualify Uruguay's two representatives in the Libertadores Cup . . . and fielding their national squad players after a tug-of-war with national team coach Houberg who wanted them to start serious training for World Cup qualifying games in February.

● In **Ecuador** it was a foregone conclusion that Nacional (the only club fielding only natives of Ecuador) would win the final round after also gaining the "Abertura" and "Finalizacion" tournaments which gave them a four-point start in the six-team title decider. Joint runners-up Deportivo Cuenca and Emelec were due to play off for the other Libertadores Cup place.

SOUTH AMERICAN ROUND-UP

by ERIC WEIL

River Plate's Merlo (5) takes the ball off Pagnani (Estudiantes, 6) after the latter had robbed Beltran (8) in an Argentine national championship match which finished 0-0.

A TOTAL of 29 international matches were played by eight South American countries last year — 12 of them in the Atlantic Cup, three by Argentina in Europe, three by Brazil in the United States Bicentennial tournament and the other 11 on the South American continent, mostly against each other apart from two games against the Soviet Union, the only visitors from abroad during 1976.

Argentina were the most active with 13 full internationals during the year, but as they are not involved in current World Cup qualifying games — they are automatic finalists as hosts in 1978 — and are likely to be the most active again in 1977, we will look at their preparations next month.

RECORDS OF SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES DURING 1976

	Pl.	Home					Away					Total					
		W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	%
Brazil	11	4	0	0	9	2	6	1	0	15	4	10	1	0	24	6	95
Argentina	13	3	2	1	10	5	5	0	2	12	8	8	2	3	22	13	70
Ecuador	1	0	1	0	2	2	X	X	X	X	X	0	1	0	2	2	50
Paraguay	6	1	1	1	4	4	0	2	1	5	7	1	3	2	9	11	42
Uruguay	11	0	2	2	3	7	1	3	3	6	10	1	5	5	9	17	31
Chile	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	2	25
Peru	4	0	1	1	1	3	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	2	1	4	25
Colombia	1	0	0	1	1	2	X	X	X	X	X	0	0	1	1	2	0

(Bolivia and Venezuela played no internationals)

Play off in Chile

EVERTON, FROM Viña del Mar, and the 1975 champions, Union Española, from the capital of Santiago, after alternating at the top of the Chilean First Division for most of the season, finally tied first place and had to play off twice before Everton finally took their first title since 1952. It also gained them the right to play in the Libertadores Cup (only started in 1960 and never won by a Chilean team) for the first time.

The first play off ended in a 0-0 tie after extra time, while Everton won a second dramatic encounter 3-1 when Union Española were on the point of equalising after they had reduced the arrears to 2-1 on time. Then Everton made it safe with a third goal in time added on for stoppages. A 70,000 crowd watched the games at Santiago's national stadium with 20,000 fans making the 140 km journey from the sea-side town of Viña del Mar twice in four days.

Since their last title win 24 years ago, Everton had their ups and downs and were even relegated to the Second Division in 1973. A new committee took over the club this season and strengthened the team with several foreign and top Chilean players and this brought the desired improvement under former national team coach Pedro Morales.

But the standard of Chilean league soccer has improved all round with the signing of Argentine and Uruguayan players (mostly forwards) to replace Chilean stars which have gone abroad . . . and the trend looks like continuing. Everton were on the point of signing veteran Uruguayan defender Pavoni, star of many Libertadores Cup campaigns with Independiente (Argentina), and Colo Colo has signed former Hungarian international Ferenc Puskas on a two year contract as coach.

Puskas' arrival started a minor revolution at Chile's most popular club where coach Orlando Aravena and his coaching staff resigned, refusing to work under the Hungarian and several players have asked for transfers in sympathy. But this does not worry Puskas who has been watching video tapes of league matches played, looking for good players to buy.

Apart from that, the poor financial position of clubs has improved with gates increasing after a lean period — partly because of the better standard of soccer and close championship fight, but mostly because of the new interest created by the starting of football pools in Chile.

A sportswriters poll picked the following top league team: Vidalle (Palestino — Argentine), Galindo (Everton), Herrera (Union Española), Soto (Un. Española), Escobar (Un. Española), Inostroza (Un. Española), Novello (Un. Española — Uruguayan), Pinto (Universidad de Chile), Hidalgo (Palestino), Fabbiani (Palestino — Argentine), Ceballos (Everton — Argentine).

At press time clubs which finished second to fifth (Union Española, Universidad de Chile, Colo Colo and Palestino) are playing off to find the second Chilean representative in the 1977 Libertadores Cup.

Plenty of cash in the market

Former Everton manager Billy Bingham.

WE ARE now nearing the closing stages of the winter's crazy transfer operations, yet according to all the evidence there could be plenty more each-way movements and cash changing hands before the deadline.

It's been a tremendously hectic period, especially over the turn of the year. And all this despite one venerable man's loud prophecy that inflation was spelling the end of adventures with the bulky cheque books.

I reckon he must have quietly retired from the risky business of forecasting after the big boys moved in to sort things out, and spend nearly £2m in a 10-week spree.

However, this is the other, and, in one way, attractive side of the modern picture of the game. And, if nothing else, it clearly mirrors the determination of those who have against the poor, unfortunate have-nots.

There are many down-and-out concerns in professional soccer, of course. Like there always are in every other branch of life. More are joining them because distribution of the necessary is being narrowed into fewer channels. Which is probably why rarely more than a dozen of England's 92 League clubs now move in with bids when topliners become available.

Whenever the grapevine suggests a likely departure, one can mostly expect Arsenal, Manchester Utd, Derby, Newcastle, Everton, Spurs, Leeds, Villa, West Ham, Liverpool, Chelsea and Manchester City picking up the nearest phone. Not many others.

They didn't do business that way when Alf Common, of Sunderland, chalked up the first four-figure fee by moving to Middlesbrough, at the beginning of the century. Nor in 1920, when records were smashed by Arsenal's £10,000 pay-out for Bolton's David Jack. Generally, transfers were quiet affairs without any cross denials and double talk.

Everything hotted up when Denis Law became the first £50,000-plus signing on crossing the Pennines from Huddersfield to Manchester City forty years later, and there was also terrific competition for that expensive traveller Tony Hateley before Chelsea made a £100,000 grab.

That was in 1966. Now, a decade later, we are looking back at the quarter-million mark, having reached up to £350,000 a couple of years ago, and, though one should remember currency values have changed since Harold Wilson's pound-in-your-pocket days, it is a fact that those clubs with cash to spare are having a ball.

You can say that again. Especially when it spotlights Billy Bingham, the boy who came up the hard way on the other side of St George's channel, and has now developed into the boss with the manipulative expertise.

The former Sunderland, Luton and Everton star also had managerial experience with Southport, Plymouth, Northern Ireland and the Greeks before taking the lift to the top floor of Goodison's main stand, and moving into the hot seat.

Recognising the wafer-thin difference between triumph and failure, and that only results determine a length of stay with Everton, the old Irish winger has never been afraid to buy and sell, proving it with market dealings involving almost £2½m since being appointed a mere four years ago.

Balanced

What's more, the outgoing sales have been so good that the books have almost balanced in a 3-year special reconstruction period. This way: Sales £1,028,000 — purchases £1,195,000. A wonderful effort by any yardstick. So no-one can deny this friendly personality when he says: "The team I've got just now, actually cost me less than £200,000".

That was a point to consider in a job from which Johnny Carey suddenly departed when they were fifth in the League. And when, after Bingham himself, had lifted them from 18th to seventh in his first campaign, a shareholder at the annual meeting talked about "another mediocre season".

The criticism had continued however, especially with their Anfield rivals, just across the park, doing well year after year. So perhaps Billy was not really surprised when the chopper fell on him, too, earlier this year.

ERIC THORNTON'S SOCCER NOTEBOOK

YOUNG STARS OF THE FUTURE

LET'S SHOW a flag today. Let's feel a little happier in the knowledge that despite recurring disappointments there could be a brighter soccer future for England than many are prepared to admit just now.

Don Revie's international evidence, though often unreliable, may not support such a theory, but I'm banking on the maintenance of supplies which are now coming from the nurseries of the big clubs.

More than ever before, youngsters of tremendous promise are beginning to force their way into the important league line-ups, and, in many instances, revealing personal determination by demanding moves when no immediate vacancies are available.

A quick check around the country produces a remarkable list of almost 300 of tomorrow's likely stars. I've picked out just a few prospects for possible World Cup grading in the years ahead.

First of all, there's Gary Owen, of Manchester City, then Spurs Glen Hoddle, Hull City's Paul Haigh, Luton's Paul Futcher, West Bromwich Albion's Bryan Robson, Stoke's Garth Crooks, Liverpool's David Fairclough, David Swindlehurst, of Crystal Palace, and Tony Morley, the boy who had the temerity to snub Arsenal.

Starlets

Owen, a Rugby League fan during younger days because Dad played the big ball game professionally, is an 18-year-old battling for a place each week in a Maine Road camp packed with other starlets.

Everybody at school followed Manchester United, but Gary broke away and signed for the rivals on the other side of town because of losing interest and becoming disappointed in the Old Trafford outfit when Frank O'Farrell got the sack.

Hoddle, who learned to love the game on the White Hart Lane terraces, and could have claimed a peg in many other dressing rooms, won the headlines for a great debut, then was dropped sensationally.

New boss Terry Neill, recognising the dangers, kept the boys feet on the ground by a move which brought him out of the clouds, then later reintroduced the anxious 17-year-old, who likes attacking football.

Haigh, a Scarborough teenager and Hull City defender, who is almost unknown away from the East coast, is blossoming in a tough Second Division, a remark which might also apply to Futcher, whom you may remember joined Luton in a twin signing with brother Ron.

Robson, a Novocastrian, idolised Newcastle United, then, like Owen, changed affections. It was all due to the fact that he didn't like the way a pal was shown the door after trials at St James's.

The brotherhood of kids of that era linked Bryan in area squads with Colin Todd and Colin Suggett, while England youth teams paired him with West Ham's Alan Curbishley, and Chelsea's Butch Wilkins.

Crooks is THE local recruit. For while living in one of the many narrow streets encircling the Victoria ground, he also attended nearby schools — and spent most holidays and spare time booting a ball against the club's office wall.

Says manager Tony Waddington: "He used to juggle with a ball outside for hour after hour when he was only about knee high, and it seemed he was destined to play for Stoke."

Fairclough, a gingernut with a scoring flair, was once The Kop's "Super sub". Especially when, after he'd gone on for an injured colleague, the referee blew first for a bounce-up, then immediately afterwards for full-time.

Few Anfielders will remember David's first appearance. Because it was on the same day that skipper Emlyn Hughes completed 500 club games for Liverpool. So no-one worried about a new boy.

Finally, we have London-born Swindlehurst, the bright hope of Crystal Palace, and, of course, the boy Morley, the England youth star who turned down a Highbury offer of nearly £200 a week to sign for Preston — so that he could live at home.

Garth Crooks (11) of Stoke is pictured in action against Tottenham Hotspur.

East European review... East European review...

SURPRISE WIN FOR TEPLICE

JUST ONE round of the autumn campaign in Czechoslovakia remained when World Soccer went to press last month and the only real surprise of the day was Teplice's 1-0 away win over Slovan Bratislava. Josef Fiser scored the only goal before a crowd of just 3,491 which was lost in the giant Tehelny Pole stadium. Sparta pulled in the best crowd of the day with 8,500 for the visit of champions Banik Ostrava who had at the time, no fewer than six players out of action with broken limbs.

Promising newcomer Milan Vdovjak scored first for Sparta but Petr Slany equalised near the end.

League leaders Dukla have been beaten only once so far and though they had a hard time doing it, finally managed to take both points from newly promoted Frydek-Mistek away from home. Dukla were four goals up in the first 28 minutes through Ladislav Vizek (2), Frantisek Stambachr and Zdenek Nehoda. But the home side stayed in the game, scoring twice before the break and again in the second half for Dukla to win 4-3.

With Ivo Viktor out of action with an injured back, reserve goalkeeper, 22 years old Jaroslav Netolicka stepped into the breach and has improved with every game. Anyone else bar Viktor might even have a tough time getting his place back. Jaroslav Vejvoda has done a fine job taking Dukla to the top. With Netolicka in goal, his team is built round Vaclav Samek in defence and Zdenek Nehoda in attack. Most of the other players are newcomers all in their very early twenties.

Slavia won their last game 2-1 away to Lokomotive Kosice with Rudolf Svonoda (ex Jablonec) scoring an early goal for them and veteran Frantisek Vesely getting the winner in the second half after Marian Cernicky had equalised. This keeps Slavia in second place throughout the winter, but a clear five points behind Dukla.

VSS Kosice — with internationals Jaroslav Pollak and Dusan Galis who will surely be remembered by England — continue to prop up the other clubs from the bottom. Their position seems inexplicable, except that nothing has gone right for them.

Finally, Slovan visited Zilina in mid-week to make up for their postponed match and set everyone even on 15 games. Without internationals Vencel, Pivarnik, Ondrus and Gogh, Slovan just fell apart however and Zilina won comfortably by 3-1.

In the semi final of the Czech Cup, Sparta Prague only just managed to oust LIAZ Jablonec from Division II. The two sides drew 1-1 after extra time with veteran Jiri Klement signed last summer, getting Sparta's goal. The two teams then went on to take penalty kicks and after the penalty score stood at 5-5, Sparta finally won 6-5 when Jablonec missed their 6th kick.

Stal Mielec lose chance

THE LAST games before the break in Poland gave champions Stal Mielec chance to make up some leeway against current leaders LKS Lodz, but meeting in Lodz they could only draw 0-0 to retain the status quo.

Generally it wasn't a good day for the top teams or the well known sides. Gornik Zabrze were hammered 4-0 away by Lech Poznan; Ruch Chorzow could only draw 1-1 away to Zaglebie Sosnowiecz and Legia Warsaw found themselves a goal in arrears away to GKS Tychy who have never repeated the form they showed last season. A late goal by new "Footballer of the Year" Kazimierz Deyna finally gave Legia a point in a 1-1 draw.

Slask Wroclaw occupying an exalted second place, found themselves on the wrong end of a 5-0 scoreline away to Wisla in Krakow. Wisla have been very disappointing so far this season, but perhaps this marks the turning point for them. Kazikierz Kmiecik took a hat trick with the other goals coming from stopper Henryk Maculewicz and right back Henryk Szymanowski who chipped in with his contribution just four minutes from the end.

Tadeusz Nowak (Legia) and Leszek Wolski (Pogon) head the scorers list with eight goals each from 15 games with three other relatively unknown players pressing them the closest: new cap Zbigniew Boniek (Widzew Lodz), Eugiusz Nagiel (Szombierki Bytom) and Wojciech Tyc (Odra Opole) each having scored seven. Grzegorz Lato (Stal), Kazimierz Kmiecik (Wisla) and Roman Ogaza (GKS Tychy) all top men in front of goal last season are on six with Andrzej Szarmach (now Stal) and Kazimierz Deyna (Legia) having four.

Another top striker of last season who has failed thus far is Zdislaw Kapka of Wisla Krakow. In the first 15 games his tally is only two, and this combined with the relative failure of Kmiecik explains why much fancied Wisla have failed to challenge the top clubs this season.

The leading football weekly, *Pilka Nozna*, has published Poland's results and scorers for the year, together with their estimate of Poland's top players.

According to them, they have only four players of international class on current form: stopper Wladyslaw Zmuda (Slask), midfield players Henryk Kasperczak (Stal Mielec) and Deyna, together with Szarmach.

At international level, they include the Olympic Games and their figures show clearly that ex-national team boss Kazikierz Gorski was trying to rebuild his team. In 1976 no fewer than 15 new caps were introduced to the side . . . and Jacek Gmoch is including several of them now, reaping the benefit.

Top scorers at international level were Andrzej Szarmach with nine goals, Lato with five and Deyna four.

DRESDE

LEAGUE LEADERS in East Germany after 10 games with only one defeat, champions Dynamo Dresden began to show the strain of going for the Cup and League and European Cup treble in the later stages of the autumn campaign.

At the 11th hurdle, away to bottom of the table Wismut Aue, Dynamo went down 2-1 after Reinhard Hafner had given them an early lead. They won 13 to 5 on corners but despite all their pressure couldn't equalise after Wismut had gone in front.

At home the following week, Dynamo attracted a 29,000 crowd for the visit of 1st FC Magdeburg. Again they looked to be in trouble with a 0-0 scoreline late in the game, but this time Dieter Riedl came to the rescue with a goal seven minutes from time to give them a 1-0 win and two vital points.

Then, having to travel again, Dynamo Dresden crashed 1-2 again, this time away to BFC Dynamo Berlin whom they crushed 4-1 a little earlier in the cup. This time Ulrich Netz and Dietmar Labes scored for the Berlin side and captain and libero Hans-Jurgen Dorner, making his come-back after injury was left to get Dresden's consolation goal four minutes from time.

With Dresden picking up only two points from a possible six, BFC Dynamo Berlin and

East European review... East European review...

Simonian takes charge

AFTER THE failures of Valerij Lobanovsky as manager of Dynamo Kiev and the Russian national team, he has been replaced in both jobs. Former Spartak star centre forward, 50 years old Nikita Simonian, now an FA Vice President has come out of retirement to lead the national team and Lobanovsky's former assistant, Michel Koman was the man who led Dynamo Kiev back to some sort of form, and second place, in the second (half) championship of 1976.

Aiding Simonian is another former Spartak colleague of the 1950s, Juri Sedow, and when the squad to visit Argentina (0-0) and Brazil (0-2) was announced, it was clear that Simonian is starting with a new broom. Included were 11 Dynamo Moscow players — winners of the first half-championship — seven from ZDSA the Moscow Army team, four from Torpedo Moscow and six from Dynamo Kiev. In the event, none of the Kiev players actually played in South America, with almost entirely new teams contesting both games. The results were reasonable, for almost anyone would go down away to Brazil just now, and no doubt men like Victor Kolotov and Oleg Blokhin will find their way back into the side.

The 1976 'Footballer of the Year' award has gone to ZDSA's 30 year old goalkeeper Vladimir Astapovski with David Kipiani (Dynamo Tbilissi) in second place and Blokhin third. Another Kiev player, only 24 and very promising, who earned sixth place was inside forward Leonid Burjak.

Scorer

In the second half-championship — the official one — Torpedo Moscow took the title, and a place in the next European Cup. Managed by Valentin Ivanov, now 40 years old and scorer of 124 league goals in the 50's and 60's when he was a regular choice for the national team, Ivanov has created quite a young team.

One of the regular players is only 18 years old and four more are current Under-23 caps.

Promoted for the 1977 championship are two familiar names, Kairat (Alma Ata) and Neftschi of Baku. Occupying the bottom two places in the official half-championship were Moscow Spartak and Dynamo Minsk.

Spartak have obviously hit hard times, finishing 14th out of 16 in the first championship and 15th in the second. But they also have friends in high places and are still quite the most popular club in Moscow where the fans have all but deserted football. With so many poor quality games, and so much football shown live and in full on TV, the mass desertion is not surprising.

For example, both semi finals of the 1976 FA Cup were shown in full on the same day on TV — one after the other. In such circumstances only the die-hard fans will go to the ground, particularly in bad weather.

Officially, Spartak are doomed, but there is already talk of increasing the First Division to 18 clubs . . . and that would save Spartak. The FA pulled off a similar move not long ago to save Zenith Leningrad from the drop.

EN SHOW STRAIN

a rebuilt FC Carl Zeiss Jena both took advantage to draw level on points at the top.

Zeiss won 2-1 away to Hansa Rostock with both goals coming from 34 years old Eberhard Vogel and the following week hammered FC Karl Marx Stadt by 3-0 with Vogel again scoring twice. Then away to Lokomotive in Leipzig they drew 1-1, leading 1-0 through an own goal, but later conceding a penalty which Rainer Lisiewicz scored from to take a point.

Followed

After beating Dynamo Dresden, bottom of the table Wismut Aue seemed to turn a corner. They followed that victory with a 1-0 win away over 1.FC Union Berlin through a penalty taken by Lothar Schmiedel in the second half and then, watched by a meagre crowd of only 3,500 in freezing weather, drew 1-1 at home to Rot Weiss Erfurt. Five points from six took Aue up from last place to 10th, leaving the two newly promoted clubs FC Hansa Rostock and 1.FC Union together at the bottom.

In the quarter finals of the Cup (the DFV Pokal), HFC Chemie beat Hansa 4-1 at home (Manfred Vogel scoring twice) and 2-1 away with Vogel again amongst the scorers. Dynamo Dresden recovered some of their old poise to account for Rot Weiss Erfurt winning 2-0 away (Rainer Sachse and a penalty from Peter Kotte), and another win by 1-0 at home in which Dorner again went up for a set piece and scored.

The other semi finalists are FC Carl Zeiss Jena who lost 0-1 away to Stahl Riesa in the first leg but won 3-1 at home, and Lokomotive Leipzig who had a tough time accounting for unknown Motor Suhl. Away in the first leg and watched on an icy pitch by a 6,000 crowd, Lokomotive led 2-0, then 3-2 and 4-3 but were always caught and ended up drawing 4-4. Wolfgang Altmann, Dieter Kuhn, Rainer Lisiewicz (a penalty) and Henning Frenzel still popping them in regularly at 33. In the second leg, Lokomotive won comfortably by 3-0 with goals from Frenzel, Joachim Fritsche and Kuhn.

Finalists

The draw for the semi finals should be interesting with Dynamo Dresden, Lokomotive Leipzig and FC Carl Zeiss Jena, all frequent finalists in with HFC Chemie.

Top scorers in the league at the half way mark were:

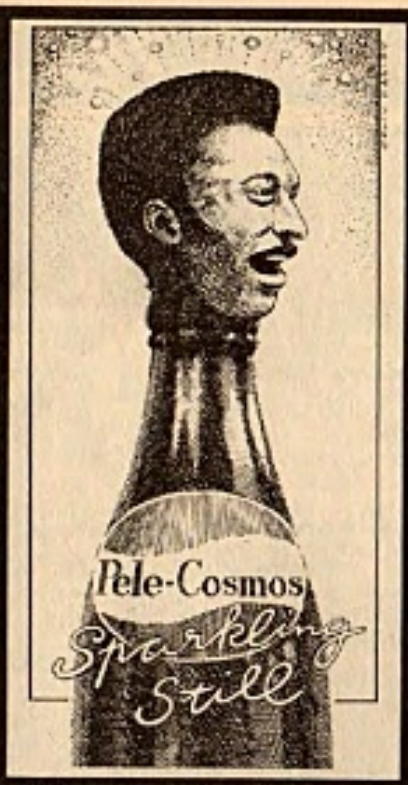
Joachim Streich (1st FC Magdeburg)	10
Jurgen Sparwasser (1st FC Magdeburg)	7
Peter Kotte (Dynamo Dresden)	7

Other highly placed well known players are Eberhard Vogel (Zeiss) and Hans-Jurgen Kreische (Dresden) with 6 each.

Oleg Blokhin of Dynamo Kiev and the USSR.

JACK ROLLIN'S DIARY

SOFIA TOP



Pele has confirmed that he will retire this year. In Paris to view a film of his life story, he said: "I am retiring because I have spent 22 years playing soccer. I absolutely have to retire to be able to rest."

Meantime his present club New York Cosmos plan to squeeze everything they can out of their ace. They will be playing on five continents in 1977.

"It will be the opportunity for me to say my farewells to soccer," added Pele.

The film "Do You Know Pele?" is made by French Director Francois Reichenbach and tells the Pele story from childhood to present day.

Pele was interviewed in an elegant Paris men's store where he bought two ties, a brown velvet jacket and an overcoat.

After a poor start to the season CSKA Sofia ended the half-way stage of the Bulgarian season as League leaders. They hold a one point lead over their eternal rivals Levski Spartak.

The Belgian Army recently played hosts to the Kuwait Army team. The pitch was icy and the temperature low. But the result was a victory for the men from the desert by two goals to one . . .

Barry Hulshoff, the Ajax centre-half who has been handicapped by injury in the last two years or so, recently celebrated his 500th match for the club. Hulshoff, who won three European Cup medals with Ajax, is still only 30.

Ferenc Puskas, the one-time galloping major of Hungarian football and later associated with Spain, is currently coaching the Chilean club Colo Colo.

Kazimierz Gorski, the former Polish national team manager, has signed a contract to be manager of the Greek club Panathinaikos.

Sandro Mazzola completed his 400th match in the Italian championship for his only senior club Inter Milan. He has scored 115 goals in his League career which began in 1960-61 at 18 years of age.

Fascinating cup draw in West Germany paired Bayern Munich with Bayern Munich Amateurs. Result 5-3 for the professionals with inevitably Gerd Muller getting four goals including a hat-trick when the Amateurs were leading 1-0.

Robby Rensenbrink, Dutch-born winger of Belgian club Anderlecht, has been voted Footballer of the Year in Belgium. He was also runner-up in the European Footballer of the Year poll.

Number 13 unlucky for some, Sporting Lisbon included. Their 13th League game produced their first defeat, a single goal reverse away to Vitoria Setubal.

Bulgaria's Footballer of the Year is 31 year old Slavia Sofia centre-forward Bojidar Grigorov who was a member of his country's 1974 World Cup squad.

Ten years after finishing third in the European Footballer of the Year title, Franz Beckenbauer won the award in 1976 for the second time. His first title was in 1972 and he was also runner-up in 1974 and 1975.

At the half-way stage in the French season First Division crowds are up on last year at the same time. This year the total is 2,318,815 compared with 2,189,250 in 1975-76.

Russia's Footballer of the Year is Vladimir Astapovski, a thirty-year-old goalkeeper who plays for the Central Red Army Moscow. Astapovski was the Olympic Games goalkeeper in Montreal, too. Runner-up was David Kipiani, the midfield player of Dynamo Tbilisi, but Oleg Blokhin of Dynamo Kiev was only third.

Paris St Germain have transferred their Portuguese centre-half Humberto Coelho to the Brazilian club International Porto Alegre who recently won the national championship again. The fee was around £120,000.

● Continued from page 29

University." At twelve minutes past two the Minnesota Kicks select John Myer, a forward from Chicago Circle, and it is all over. It has taken just under one hour, and 72 college players have been selected.

Phil Woosnam thanks everybody out there on the other end of all those connections, and suddenly from the Speakaphone comes a burst of machine gun fire, a series of harsh staccato clicks as 17 phones are hung up in rapid succession.

* * *

There you have the mechanics of the thing. As for its real meaning, that is something much more difficult to tie down. The players selected do not belong to the club that has picked them. The club has acquired only the exclusive rights to negotiate with that player. And this arrangement has already caused, in the other American sports, some legal trouble.

Recently the college draft in grid-football was ruled illegal by the courts, who said that it was an unjustifiable restriction on the players' freedom of choice to negotiate with any club he wanted . . . and, of course, to bargain for the best salary.

The NASL happened to be the first pro league to stage a draft since that decision. They have tried to liberalise things by arranging for a second draft to be held in March. Thus, any players selected in the first draft, but not signed by March, will be available for drafting again — when they will, presumably, be drafted by another club.

Actually, as far as soccer is concerned, the legal aspects of the draft take second place to another question: simply, can the holding of a college draft in soccer be justified at all?

In basketball and grid-football it makes sense because there are so many really top-class players in college that the pro clubs are drooling to get at them. The top draft choices will be signed to rich contracts, will go straight into the pro starting line-ups, and if things go right will be stars or even super-stars within a few years.

So different from the story in college soccer. The number of good players there is small, the number good enough to hold a regular starting position on an NASL team is even smaller. Last year, for example, 76 players were drafted. Of these, only 25 were signed by clubs. And only one was a regular starter throughout the season.

And if one wants to be really cynical about the draft, one can point to the NASL rule that requires each team to have one American on the field at all times. And then one can wonder how many of the college players would be playing if it weren't for that rule.

Review of 1977

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS 1976

January
Japan 1, Bulgaria 3
Japan 1, Bulgaria 1
FEBRUARY
Japan 0, Bulgaria 3
Tunisia 2, Yugoslavia 1
Algeria 1, Yugoslavia 2
Paraguay 2, Argentina 3
Uruguay 1, Brazil 2
Argentina 1, Brazil 2
W. Germany 8, Malta 0
MARCH
Algeria 0, Sweden 2
Israel 1, N. Ireland 1
Czechoslovakia 2, U.S.S.R. 2
Uruguay 2, Paraguay 2
U.S.S.R. 0, Argentina 1
England 2, Wales 1
Bulgaria 0, U.S.S.R. 3
Poland 1, Argentina 2
Eire 3, Norway 0
Hungary 2, Argentina 0
France 2, Czechoslovakia 2
APRIL
Italy 3, Portugal 1
Scotland 1, Switzerland 0
Paraguay 1, Brazil 1
Argentina 4, Uruguay 1
Yugoslavia 0, Hungary 0
E. Germany 5, Algeria 0
Czechoslovakia 2, U.S.S.R. 0
Spain 1, W. Germany 1
Yugoslavia 2, Wales 0
France 2, Poland 0
Holland 5, Belgium 0
Austria 1, Sweden 0
Switzerland 0, Hungary 1
Brazil 2, Uruguay 1
Argentina 2, Paraguay 2
MAY
Bulgaria 3, N. Korea 0
Greece 1, Poland 0
Scotland 3, Wales 1
N. Ireland 0, Scotland 3
Wales 0, England 1
England 4, N. Ireland 0
Switzerland 2, Poland 1
Sweden 1, Denmark 2
Bulgaria 1, Romania 0
Wales 1, N. Ireland 0
Scotland 2, England 1
Brazil 2, Argentina 0
Paraguay 1, Uruguay 0
Finland 1, Switzerland 0
Norway 0, Iceland 1
Belgium 1, Holland 2
Wales 1, Yugoslavia 1
W. Germany 2, Spain 0
U.S.S.R. 2, Czechoslovakia 2
Hungary 1, France 0
Brazil 1, England 0
Cyprus 1, Denmark 5
Norway 0, Denmark 0
Hungary 1, U.S.S.R. 1
Poland 0, Eire 2
England 3, Italy 2
Italy 1, Brazil 4
JUNE
Finland 0, Sweden 2
Italy 4, Romania 2
Mexico 0, Brazil 3
Sweden 2, Norway 0
Brazil 3, Paraguay 1
Uruguay 0, Argentina 3
Hungary 2, Austria 0
Finland 1, England 4
Czechoslovakia 3, Holland 1
Yugoslavia 2, W. Germany 4
Yugoslavia 2, Holland 3
Czechoslovakia 2, W. Germany 2
Austria 1, U.S.S.R. 2
JULY
Finland 1, Iceland 0
AUGUST
Sweden 6, Finland 0
Switzerland 2, Bulgaria 2
Iceland 3, Luxembourg 1
Denmark 3, Norway 0
Finland 2, Turkey 1
SEPTEMBER
Denmark 1, France 1
Iceland 0, Belgium 1
Iceland 0, Holland 1
England 1, Eire 1
Norway 1, Switzerland 0
Scotland 6, Finland 0
Sweden 1, Hungary 1
Denmark 0, Italy 1
Austria 3, Switzerland 1
Bulgaria 2, Turkey 2
Romania 1, Czechoslovakia 1
Finland 7, Luxembourg 1
Greece 0, Israel 1
Norway 3, Sweden 2
E. Germany 1, Hungary 1
Italy 3, Yugoslavia 0
OCTOBER
Wales 0, W. Germany 2
Czechoslovakia 3, Romania 2
Chile 0, Uruguay 0
Switzerland 1, Sweden 2
Greece 1, Hungary 1
Bulgaria 2, France 2
Spain 1 Yugoslavia 0
Peru 0, Uruguay 0
Turkey 3, Eire 3
Austria 2, Hungary 4
Czechoslovakia 2, Scotland 0
England 2, Finland 1
Holland 2, N. Ireland 2
Argentina 2, Chile 0
Luxembourg 1, Italy 4
Portugal 0, Poland 2
Ecuador 2, Uruguay 2
Denmark 5, Cyprus 0
Bulgaria 0, E. Germany 4
Peru 1, Argentina 3
Poland 5, Cyprus 0
Turkey 4, Malta 0
NOVEMBER
Belgium 2, N. Ireland 0
Greece 0, Austria 3
Argentina 1, Peru 0
E. Germany 1, Turkey 1
W. Germany 2, Czechoslovakia 0
Italy 2, England 0
Portugal 1, Denmark 0
France 2, Eire 0
Scotland 1, Wales 0
Malta 1, Tunisia 1
Uruguay 0, Peru 0
Argentina 0, U.S.S.R. 0
Romania 3, Bulgaria 2
DECEMBER
Brazil 2, U.S.S.R. 0
Cyprus 1, Portugal 2
Malta 0, Austria 1
Portugal 2, Italy 1

England forward Stan Bowles.

● Continued from page 5

ing more (18 goals). The trick for them is to get the balance right.

Belgium are a team that are considerably better than their poor position suggests. Their figures, two wins and two defeats in four games, cover a transitional period with Guy Thys taking over from Raymond Goethals. They were also unfortunate to have been paired with Holland in the European championship quarter finals and meeting Johan Cruyff in his better mood and got a good beating by 5-0. Belgium are amongst those sides I expect to improve in 1977.

Another team that should improve is Northern Ireland who though never a giant in the game should certainly do better than figure down at the bottom in 33rd place with only Malta and Cyprus beneath them. Bearing in mind the problems facing the game in Belfast it is a miracle that the game survives there at all, but the fact remains that almost the entire Northern Ireland team play for English clubs and are thus unaffected by the bombings in Belfast. Danny Blanchflower has a real job on his hands.

Just what can be done by minnows is underlined by Iceland and Finland. Iceland have done extremely well during the last two years, beating East Germany and drawing away to them, beating Norway 1-0 and Luxembourg 3-1, they have also held both Belgium and Holland to 0-1 wins in Reyjkavik in World Cup games. As a result they have climbed away from the other minnows leaving comparatively experienced Switzerland who so often did well in past World Cups to take their place.

Finland, too, improved over their 1975 record: won 0 drawn 1 lost 3 to move up to 20th place with four wins from nine games . . . and underlining that they are no longer minnows they gave Luxembourg a 7-1 thrashing as well as doing very well against England at Wembley.

Euro-review

compiled by Keir Radnedge

UEFA Cup
Third round, first legs

THE UEFA Cup, though third in order of seniority, threw up an excellent selection of third round ties which would certainly have graced the later stages of the Cup-winners' Cup.

And among the teams to go a long way towards the quarter finals after just 90 minutes were **Barcelona.**

With Johan Cruyff in top form they convincingly beat **Oesters Vaxjoe** 3-0 in Sweden in freezing conditions. Manuel Clares, back in favour now Rinus Michels is again the boss, scored twice, and Johan Neeskens, who also scored, looked more like his old self after some unfortunate displays in Spanish league matches.

Things didn't look so rosy however for neighbours **Espanol**, who beat themselves at home to **Feyenoord** with an own goal by Pedro de Felipe. Those two games saw the only home defeats of the first legs.

There weren't any draws, though **RWD Molenbeek** left it late before reserve defender Alex Lafont hit in a long shot with the unwitting assistance of **Schalke's** unpredictable Yugoslav goalkeeper, Enver Maric. A pity for Maric — earlier he had saved well, as had his opposite number de Bree, to keep the scoresheet clear.

Only a few minutes before the goal he had tipped away a shot from Jacques Teugels after a bad defensive slip by Rolf Russmann. Schalke clearly missed injured centre forward Klaus Fischer.

Defender

But it was an even worse night for **Köln.** Hennes Weisweiler has long been much admired by **Queen's Park Rangers'** manager Dave Sexton, but this time it was clear that the pupil is catching up fast on the old master.

Veteran defender Frank McLintock set up the two first half goals for Don Givens and David Webb, and Stan Bowles scored a fine third to take his total in the competition this season to 10 — a British scoring record in Europe.

The London side were clearly pleased, and surprised, to find Köln leaving out World Cup man Wolfgang Overath. Köln said he was injured, but it's no secret that he and Weisweiler haven't been seeing eye to eye.

A 3-0 scoreline was also **Juventus'** reward against the Russians of **Shakhtor Donetsk.** The irrepressible Roberto Bettega scored the first thanks to a neat pass from Roberto Boninsegna and Marco Tardelli hit the second after goalkeeper Degtarev pushed a shot by Antonello Cuccureddu from a Franco Causio free kick against the bar.

Boninsegna made it 3-0 after a one-two with Romeo Benetti and Juventus eased up considerably in the second half.

A three-goal win for Juventus, but a three-goal defeat for the other Italian survivors, **Milan**, who lost 4-1 in **Bilbao** despite going ahead through Fabio Capello in the 26th minute. Gianni Rivera made the goal and despite conceding an equaliser to a penalty just before half-time and another goal soon after the break it seemed Milan would hold on to a reasonable result to take home.

Instead two goals in the last ten minutes from Dani and Carlos meant all hell was let loose in a Milan team who have yet to sort themselves out this season.

The biggest win of the night was provided by **Magdeburg**, beating **Videoton** of Hungary 5-0. There was a penalty in this game too, and though Kovacs blocked Jurgen Pommerenke's spot kick, he couldn't stop the East German World Cup forward hitting in the rebound to complete the scoring.

Finally, two early goals gave **AEK Athens** a precious advantage over **Red Star Belgrade.**

Best attendance was the 50,000 who saw Juventus win in Turin, with the lowest the 11,250 who say RWD sneak ahead of Schalke.

AEK Athens 2 (Papaioannou 19, Mavros 28)
Red Star Belgrade 0
HT: 2-0. Att: 28,000
Athletic Bilbao 4 (Dani 44 pen, 81, Carlos 47, 86)
AC Milan 1 (Capello 26)
HT: 1-1. Att: 40,000
Espanol 0
Feyenoord 1 (de Felipe own goal 32)
HT: 0-1. Att: 35,000
Juventus 3 (Bettega 16, Tardelli 19, Boninsegna 39)
Shakhtor Donetsk 0
HT: 3-0. Att: 50,000
Magdeburg 5 (Streich 8, Tyll 23, 61, Mewes 54, Pommerenke 80)
Videoton 0
HT: 2-0. Att: 15,000
Oester Vaxjoe 0
CF Barcelona 3 (Clares 37, 50, Neeskens 46)
HT: 0-1. Att: 14,706
Queen's Park Rangers 3 (Givens 38, Webb 41, Bowles 74)
1st FC Köln 0
HT: 2-0. Att: 21,143
RWD Molenbeek 1 (Lafont 83)
Schalke 0
HT: 0-0. Att: 11,250

Third round, second legs

FEYENOORD, winners in 1974, gave notice of their determination to achieve a repeat in outclassing Espanol.

They dominated play and but for slack finishing could have trebled the score. Austrian striker Willy Kreuz certainly earned the opening goal. He saw one fierce shot fisted over the bar by goalkeeper Fernandez, then headed in the corner.

Three minutes later French referee Robert Wurtz disallowed a 'goal' by Nico Jansen who finally did put his name on the scoresheet quarter of an hour from the end after taking a pass from Jan Verheyen, who was touching the ball for the first time after substituting for Marti Vreysen.

At least the Catalan capital keep an interest in the UEFA Cup with **CF Barcelona** who thrashed **Oester Vaxjoe** 5-1 at home. Juan Manuel Asensi, slowly recovering form after a long injury lay-off, scored twice. Cruyff got another.

Also keeping Spain concerned are **Athletic Bilbao** after a dramatic return with **Milan** in San Siro. The score was 0-0 at half time, thanks to some fine saves from Jose Iribar, but Egidio Calloni beat him at last after 54 minutes. Giorgio Biasiolo added a second soon after when Albertino Bigon headed the ball to his feet.

Now Milan were in full cry, and they seemed to have the tie won when Calloni was brought down in the penalty area, with seven minutes to go, by Chechu Rojo, and got up to hit in the spot kick.

More drama

But there was more drama — and again Rojo was involved. For once he managed to get inside the penalty box at the other end and was this time himself brought down by Bigon. There were three minutes to go when Madariaga put Bilbao into the quarter finals with his own penalty.

An exciting match, if a tough one. Rivera of Milan and Villar, Amorrutu and Onaderra of Bilbao were all shown the yellow card.

There was even an expulsion as **Köln** strove to turn the tables on **Queen's Park Rangers**, who shocked their West German hosts by taking the lead through Don Masson in the fifth minute.

The West Germans didn't lose heart, and had scored three times before the interval. Their chances of the extra two to win the tie seemed bright since QPR were already down to ten men, having had England right back Dave Clement sent off a minute before half-time for throwing a punch at Köln veteran, Johannes Löhr.

Yet some brilliant saves by Phil Parkes denied even Dieter Müller and the superb Heinz Flohe — who scored once and made two goals — and though Müller made the score 4-1 just before the end, it came too late to give Köln the time they needed to get just one more.

An away goal was vital too for **AEK Athens.** In front of 90,000 Yugoslav fans they snatched a goal through West German forward Walter Wagner, and **Red Star Belgrade** — like Köln 3-1 up at half-time — eventually had to admit defeat.

Useless victories also for **Videoton** over **Magdeburg** and **Shakhtor Donetsk** over **Juventus** while the big surprise was **Schalke's** failure to overcome **RDW Molenbeek** in front of their own fans. Again an early goal was vital for the visitors. The scorer in Gelsenkirchen was Teugels.

Attendances were far better this time, with 90,000 in Belgrade and apart from the meagre 7,000 to see Videoton and Magdeburg, all the other crowd figures topped 35,000.

Köln 4 (Müller 24, 60, Löhr 35, Weber 38)
Queen's Park Rangers 1 (Masson 5)
Ht: 3-1. Att: 48,000
QPR on away goal, 4-4 on agg.

WORLD CUP GUIDE

Argentina '78

27. 2.77 Israel v Korea Rep.
Japan v Korea DPR
6. 3.77 Israel v Japan
Korea Rep. v Korea DPR
13. 3.77 Japan v Israel
Korea DPR v Korea Rep.
20. 3.77 Korea Rep. v Israel
Korea DPR v Japan
26. 3.77 Japan v Korea Rep.
27. 3.77 Korea DPR v Israel
3. 4.77 Korea Rep. v Japan
4. 4.77 Israel v Korea DPR

EUROPE

Group 1
23. 5.76 Cyprus 1, Denmark 5
16.10.76 Portugal 0, Poland 2
27.10.76 Denmark 5, Cyprus 0
31.10.76 Poland 5, Cyprus 0
17.11.76 Portugal 1, Denmark 0
5.12.76 Cyprus 1, Portugal 2
1. 5.77 Denmark v Poland
15. 5.77 Cyprus v Poland
21. 9.77 Poland v Denmark
29.10.77 Poland v Portugal
16.11.77 Portugal v Cyprus

Group 2
13. 6.76 Finland 1, England 4
22. 9.76 Finland 7, Luxembourg 1
13.10.76 England 2, Finland 1
16.10.76 Luxembourg 1, Italy 4
17.11.76 Italy 2, England 0
30. 3.77 England v Luxembourg
26. 5.77 Luxembourg v Finland
8. 6.77 Finland v Italy
12.10.77 Luxembourg v England
15.10.77 Italy v Finland
16.11.77 England v Italy
3.12.77 Italy v Luxembourg

Group 3
31.10.76 Turkey 4, Malta 0
17.11.76 German DR 1, Turkey 1
5.12.76 Malta 0, Austria 1
2. 4.77 Malta v German DR
17. 4.77 Austria v Turkey
30. 4.77 Austria v Malta
24. 9.77 Austria v German DR
12.10.77 German DR v Austria
29.10.77 German DR v Malta
30.10.77 Turkey v Austria
16.11.77 Turkey v German DR
27.11.77 Malta v Turkey

Group 4
5. 9.76 Iceland 0, Belgium 1
8. 9.76 Iceland 0, Netherlands 1
13.10.76 Netherlands 2, Northern Ireland 2
10.11.76 Belgium 2, Northern Ireland 0
26. 3.77 Belgium v Netherlands
11. 6.77 Iceland v Northern Ireland
31. 8.77 Netherlands v Iceland
4. 9.77 Belgium v Iceland
21. 9.77 Northern Ireland v Netherlands
26.10.77 Netherlands v Belgium
16.11.77 Northern Ireland v Belgium

Group 5
9.10.76 Bulgaria 2, France 2
17.11.76 France 2, Eire 0
30. 3.77 Eire v France
1. 6.77 Bulgaria v Eire
12.10.77 Eire v Bulgaria
16.11.77 France v Bulgaria

Group 6
16. 6.76 Sweden 2, Norway 0
8. 9.76 Norway 1, Switzerland 0
9.10.76 Switzerland 1, Sweden 2
8. 6.77 Sweden v Switzerland
7. 9.77 Norway v Sweden
30.10.77 Switzerland v Norway

Group 7
13.10.77 Czechoslovakia 2, Scotland 0
17.11.76 Scotland 1, Wales 0
30. 3.77 Wales v Czechoslovakia
21. 9.77 Scotland v Czechoslovakia
12.10.77 Wales v Scotland
16.11.77 Czechoslovakia v Wales

Group 8
10.10.76 Spain 1, Yugoslavia 0
6. 4.77 Rumania v Spain
8. 5.77 Yugoslavia v Rumania
6.10.77 Spain v Rumania
3.11.77 Rumania v Yugoslavia
30.11.77 Yugoslavia v Spain

Group 9
9.10.76 Greece 1, Hungary 1
24. 4.77 USSR v Greece
30. 4.77 Hungary v USSR
10. 5.77 Greece v USSR
18. 5.77 USSR v Hungary
25. 5.77 Hungary v Greece

CONCACAF
(extra preliminary matches)
Northern Area
24. 9.76 Canada 1, USA 1
3.10.76 USA 0, Mexico 0
10.10.76 Canada 1, Mexico 0
15.10.76 Mexico 3, USA 0
20.10.76 USA 2, Canada 0
27.10.76 Mexico 0, Canada 0

Central Area
4. 4.76 Panama 3, Costa Rica 2
2. 5.76 Panama 1, El Salvador 1
11. 7.76 Costa Rica 3, Panama 0
1. 8.76 El Salvador 4, Palma 1
17. 9.76 Panama 2, Guatemala 4
26. 9.76 Guatemala 7, Panama 0
1.12.76 El Salvador 1, Costa Rica 1
5.12.76 Costa Rica 0, Guatemala 0
8.12.76 Guatemala v El Salvador
12.12.76 Guatemala v Costa Rica
17.12.76 Costa Rica v El Salvador
19.12.76 El Savador v Guatemala

Caribbean Area
2. 4.76 Dom. Republic 0, Haiti 3
17. 4.76 Haiti 3, Dom. Republic 0
4. 7.76 Guyana 2, Surinam 0
31. 7.76 N. Antilles 1, Haiti 2
14. 8.76 Haiti 7, N. Antilles 0
15. 8.76 Barbados 2, Trinidad/Tobago 1
15. 8.76 Jamaica 1, Cuba 3
29. 8.76 Cuba 2, Jamaica 0
29. 8.76 Surinam 3, Guana 0
31. 8.76 Trinidad/Tobago 1, Barbados 0
14. 9.76 Trinidad/Tobago 3, Barbados 1 (3rd match in Barbados)
14.11.76 Surinam 1, Trinidad/Tobago 1
28.11.76 Trinidad/Tobago 2, Surinam 2
19.12.76 Play-off
28.11.76 Cuba 1, Haiti 1
11.12.76 Haiti 1, Cuba 1
Play-off Haiti 2, Cuba 0

AFRICA
Extra Peliminary Round
7. 3.76 Sierra Leone 5, Niger 1
21. 3.76 Niger 2, Sierra Leone 1
13. 3.76 Upper Volta 1, Mauritania 1
28. 3.76 Mauritania 0, Upper Volta 2

First Round
1. 4.76 Algeria 1, Libya 0
16. 4.76 Libya 0, Algeria 0
9. 5.76 Zambia 4, Malawi 0
30. 5.76 Malawi 0, Zambia 1
4. 9.76 Upper Volta 1, Ivory Coast 1
16. 9.76 Ivory Coast 2, Upper Volta 0
31.10.76 Senegal 1, Togo 1
17.10.76 Togo 1, Senegal 0
10.10.76 Ghana 2, Guinea 1
16.10.76 Sierra Leone 0, Nigeria 0
30.10.76 Nigeria 6, Sierra Leone 2
17.10.76 Congo 2, Cameroon 2
31.10.76 Cameroon 0, Congo 2
Guinea 2, Ghana 1
16. 1.77 Ghana 0, Guinea 2 (play-off)
12.12.76 Morocco v Tunisia
9. 1.77 Tunisia v Morocco
Egypt 3, Ethiopia 0
Ethiopia 1, Egypt 2

ASIA/OCEANIA
3. 7.77 Australia v New Zeland
6. 7.77 Taiwan v Australia
10. 7.77 Australia v Taiwan
13. 7.77 N. Zealand v Taiwan
17. 7.77 N. Zealand v Australia
20. 7.77 Taiwan v N. Zealand

Group 3
12.11.76 Saudi Arabia 2, Syria 0
26.11.76 Syria 2, Saudi Arabia 1

SOUTH AMERICA
Group 1
20. 2.77 Colombia v Brazil
24. 2.77 Colombia v Paraguay
6. 3.77 Paraguay v Colombia
9. 3.77 Brazil v Colombia
13. 3.77 Paraguay v Brazil
17/20. 3.77 Brazil v Paraguay

CF Barcelona 5 (Clares 3, Cruyff 11, Asensi 33, 52, Heredia 81)
Oesters Vaxjoe 1 (Everson 64)
HT: 3-0. Att: 50,000
CF Barcelona 8-1 on agg.
Feyenoord 2 (Kreuz 29, N. Jansen 76)
Espanol 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 68,000
Feyenoord 3-0 on agg.
AC Milan 3 (Calloni 54, 83 pen, Biasiolo 60)
Bilbao 1 (Madariaga 87 pen)
HT: 0-0. Att: 40,000
Bilbao 5-4 on agg.
Red Star Belgrade 3 (Baralic 21, Filipovic 30, Savic 33)
AEK Athens 1 (Wagner 25)
HT: 3-1. Att: 90,000
AEK on away goal, 3-3 on agg.
Schalke 1 (Abramczik 44)
RWD Molenbeek 1 (Teugels 24)
HT: 1-1. Att: 35,500
RWD 2-1 on agg.
Shakhtor Donetsk 1 (Shevluk 35)
Juventus 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 50,000
Juventus 3-1 on agg.
Videoton 1 (J. Nagy 21)
Magdeburg 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 7,000
Magdeburg 5-1 on agg.

Classified Results

INTERNATIONALS

November 25

URUGUAY 0
PERU 0

Uruguay: R. Rodriguez, De los Santos, Olivera, Roux, Pereyra, Ramirez, Muñiz, (R. E. Rodriguez), Jimenez, Morena, Graffigna, Victorino.

Peru: Ballesteros, Trigueros, Melendez, Palacios, Diaz, Velasquez, Quesada, Perales, La Rosa, Gomiti, Zevallos.

November 28

ARGENTINA 0
SOVIET UNION 0

Argentina: Gatti, Tarantini, Olguin, Killer, Carrascosa, Ardiles, Gallego, Valencia (Rocha), Houseman, Saldaño (Bochini), Bertoni.

Soviet Union: Gontar, Druglov, Khinchagashili, Olshanski, Parov, Suchilin (Berezhnoi), Mochaidze, Tarkhanov, Dolmatov, Cheschokov (Slobodian), Petrosian.

December 1

BRAZIL (0) 2 (Falcao, Zico)
SOVIET UNION 0

Brazil: Leao, Carlos Alberto (Marinho), Amaral, Beto, Marco Antonio, Givanildo (Falcao), Zico, Rivelino (Cacapava), Gil, Roberto, Ney.

Soviet Union: Gontar, Druglov, Olchensky, Khinchagashili, Parov, Mochaidze (Dolmatov), Cheenokov, Kazatchonok (Tarkhanov), Slobodian, Suchilin, Petrosian.

"Simon Bolivar" Cup (for champions of Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela, Colombia — played in Venezuela): **Portuguesa (Ven) 1 Guabira (Bol) 0 (Nov 28); Alianza Lima (Peru) 2 America Cali (Col) 1 (Nov 28); Guabira 1 Alianza Lima 0 (Dec 2); Portuguesa 1 America Cali 0 (Dec 2); Guabira 3 America Cali 2 (Dec 4); Alianza Lima 2 Portuguesa 0 (Dec 2). Final standings — 1. Alianza Lima (on goals) 4 pts; 2. Guabira 4; 3. Portuguesa 4; 4. America Cali 0.**

WORLD CUP
CONCACAF — NORTHERN ZONE

Canada 1 (Bolitho)
United States 1 (Bandov)

Canada: Chursky: Iarusci, Robinson, Bobby Lenarduzzi, Wilson: Kerr Douglas, Bolitho, Marcantonio: Parsons, Thompson.

U.S.: Mausser: Smith, Skotarek, Pecher, Pollihan: Mason, Trost, D'Errico: Grgurev, Flater, Bandov.

United States 0
Mexico 0

U.S.: Mausser: Cohen (Formoso), Skotarek, D'Errico, Pollihan: Bick (Ralbovsky), Trost, Wit: Flater, Grgurev, Bandov.

Mexico: Castrejon: Najera, Galindo, Vazquez, Ramos: De la Torre, Davila, Cardenas: Damian, Jimenez, Cuellar.

Canada 1 (Parsons)
Mexico 0

Canada: Chursky: Iarusci, Robinson (Sam Lenarduzzi), Bobby Lenarduzzi, Wilson: Kerr, Douglas, Bolitho: Gant, Budd (Parsons), Thompson.

Mexico: Castrejon: Najera, Ramos, Cardenas, Vazquez: De la Torre, Davila, Sanchez: Jimenez (Solias), Anguiano, Cuellar.

Mexico 3 (Solias, Damian, Davila)
United States 0

Mexico: Castrejon: Najera, Galindo, Ramos, Vazquez: De la Torre, Davila, Solias (Anguiano): Damian (Chavez), Aceves, Cuellar.

U.S.: Mausser: Smith, Pecher, Skotarek, Formoso: Wit (Ralbovsky), Trost, Flater (Grgurev), D'Errico: Vees, Bandov.

United States 2 (Rys, Veee)
Canada 0

U.S.: Mausser: Smith, Skotarek, Pecher, Pollihan: D'Errico, Trost, Rys (Flater): Veee, Grgurev, Bandov.

Canada: Chursky: Iarusci, Sam Lenarduzzi, Bobby Lenarduzzi, Wilson: Kerr, Douglas, Bolitho: Johnson, Parsons, Thompson (Budd).

Mexico 0
Canada 0

Mexico: Castrejon: Najera, Ramos, Galindo, Vazquez: De la Torre, Davila, Solias: Montoya, Aceves (Jimenez), Cuellar (Cardenas).

Canada: Chursky: Iarusci, Sam Lenarduzzi, Bobby Lenarduzzi, Wilson: Kerr, Douglas, Bolitho: Ayre: Johnson, Budd (Thompson), McLeod.

Canada 3 (Budd, Bobby Lenarduzzi, Bolitho)
United States 0

Canada: Bilecki: Iarusci, Robinson, Sam Lenarduzzi, Wilson: Kerr (Bolitho), Bobby Lenarduzzi, Ayre: Kodeija (Gant), Budd, McLeod.

U.S.: Mausser: Smith, Skotarek, Pecher, Pollihan: Ralbovsky, Trost, Flater: Grgurev (Formoso), Bandov, Veee.

Wales (0) 0
West Germany (1) 2 (Beckenbauer, Heynckes)

Wales: Davies; Page (Cartwright), Phillips, Evans, Jones, Mahoney, Yorath, Griffiths (Flynn), Thomas, Curtis, James.

West Germany: Kargus; Vogts, Beckenbauer, Zimmermann (Schwarzenbeck), Dietz, Stielike, Hoeness (D. Muller), Beer (Seliger), Flohe, Rummenigge, Heynckes.

Czechoslovakia (1) 3 (Panenka, Ondrus, Dobias)
Rumania (1) 2 (Balaci, Georgescu)

Czechoslovakia: Vencel (Starek); Biros (Kozak), Jozef Capkovic, Ondrus, Gogh, Pollak, Dobias, Panenka (Jurkemik), Masny, Kroupa (Vesely), Nehoda.

Rumania: Raducanu; Cheran, Sames, Salmareanu, Manea, Dinu, Jordanescu, Boloni, Troi, Georgescu, Balaci (Ionescu).

Switzerland (0) 1 (Trinchero pen.)
Sweden (1) 2 (Borjesson, Sjoberg)

Switzerland: Burgener (Grob); Brechbuhl, Trinchero, Bizzini, Chapuisat, Conz, Barberis, Botteron, Kuttel (Muller), Seiler, Jeandupeux.

Sweden: Hellstrom; Andersson, Karlsson, Nordqvist, Borg, Borjesson, Linderoth, Torstensson, Nilsson (Nordin), Sjoberg, Wendt (Ljungberg).

Bulgaria (1) 2 (Bonev, Panov)
France (2) 2 (Platini, Lacombe)

Bulgaria: Krastev; Grantcharov, Tichanski, Vassilev, B. Dimitrov (Alexandrov), Stankov, Voinov, Bonev, Milanov, Denev (Tsvetkov), Panov.

France: Baratelli; Jarvion, Bossis, Lopez, Tresor, Bathenay, Gallice, Synaeghel, Lacombe, Platini, Six.

Greece (0) 1 (Papaioannou)
Hungary (0) 1 (Nyilasi)

Greece: Konstantinou; Intzoglou, Kyrastas, Kapsis, Nikolaou, Saralis, Domises, Delikaris (Davourlis), Nikoloudis, Kritikopoulos, Papaioannou.

Hungary: Kovacs; Torok (Nagy), Balint, Kereki, Toth, Nyilasi, Ebedli, Pinter, Fazekas, Pusztai (Magyar), Varadi.

Spain (0)1 (Pirri pen.)
Yugoslavia (0) 0

Spain: Miguel Angel; Capon, Cortabarria, Pirri, Camacho, Miguel, Villar, Del Bosque (Juanito), Quini, Santillana, Churruca (Rojo).

Yugoslavia: Svilar; Katalinski, Muzinic, Peruzovic, Hadziabdic, Oblak, Jerkovic, Bogicevic, Zungul (Filipovic), Popivoda, Surjak.

Austria (1) 2 (Krankl 2)
Hungary (2) 4 (Nyilasi 2, Kereki 2)

Austria: Koncilia; Hickersberger, Robert Sara, Pezzey, Oberhofer, Hattenberger, Prohaska, Jara, Pirkner, Kreuz, Krankl.

Hungary: Kovacs; Nagy, Balint, Kereki, Toth, Nyilasi, Ebedli, Pinter, Pusztai, Fazekas, Torocsik.

Czechoslovakia (0) 2 (Panenka, Petras)
Scotland (0) 0

Czechoslovakia: Vencel; Dobias, Josef Capkovic (Jurkemik), Ondrus, Gogh (Kozak), Biros, Petras, Panenka, Pollak, Masny, Nehoda.

Scotland: Rough; McGrain, Donachie, Buchan, McQueen, Rioch, Dalglish (Burns), Masson (Hartford), Jordan, Gray (A), Gemmill.

England (1) 2 (Tueart, Royle)
Finland (0) 1 (Nieminen)

England: Clemence; Todd, Beattie, Thompson, Greenhoff, Wilkins, Keegan, Channon, Royle, Brooking (Mills), Tueart (Hill).

Finland: Enckelman; Heikkinen, Vihtila, Makynen, Ranta, Jantunen (Esa Heiskanen), Suomalainen (Pyykko), Toivola, Nieminen, Aki Heiskanen, Paatelainen.

Holland (0) 2 (Krol, Cruyff)
Northern Ireland (1) 2 (Spence, McGrath)

Holland: Treytel; Willy Van der Kerkhof (Rene Van der Kerkhof), Van Kraay, Rijsbergen, Krol, Neeskens, Jansen, Haan, Cruyff, Geels (Van der Kuylen), Ramsenbrink.

N. Ireland: Jennings; Nicholl, Jackson, Rice, Hunter, Hamilton, Best, McIlroy, McGrath (Spence), McCreery, Anderson.

Turkey (0) 3 (Cemil 2, Isa)
Eire (2) 3 (Stapleton, Daly, Waters)

Eire: Kearns; Waters, Mulligan, Martin, Holmes, Daly, Giles, Brady, Conroy, Stapleton, Givens.

Turkey: Rasim; Turgay, Alpaslan, Ismail, Cemil (A), Ali Kemal, Isa Fatih, Comel, Cemil (B), Mehmet.

Portugal (0) 0
Poland (0) 2 (Lato 2)

Portugal: Bento; Artur (Moinhos), Rodrigues, Freitas, Pietra, Octavio, Toni (Coise), Alves, Oliveira, Fernandes, Nene.

Poland: Kukla; Rzesny, Zmuda, Rudy, Kasperczak, Masztalek, Szarmach, Lato, Deyna, Maculewicz, Terlecki (Wawrowski).

Luxembourg (0) 1 (Braun)
Italy 2 (4) (Graziani, Bettega 2, Antognoni)

Luxembourg: Zender; Schaul, Mond, Pilot, De Grava, Orioli (Langers), Dresch, Margue, Krecke, Dussier, Braun.

Italy: Zoff; Tardelli, Mozzini, Facchetti, Rocca, Causio, Capello, Antognoni, Patrizio, Sala, Graziani, Bettega.

Denmark (0) 5 (Nielsen pen., Ha. Jensen 2, 1 pen., Rontved pen., Kristensen)
Cyprus (0) 0

Denmark: Larsen; Hansen, Ahlberg, Henning Munk Jensen, Rontved, Olsen, Bjornmose, Nielsen, Bjerg, Henning Jensen, Kristensen.

Cyprus: Panajaras; Constantinou, Patikis, Lilos, Stylianou, Michael, Miamiotis, Marcou, Kaiafas, Savva, Kanaris.

Bulgaria (0) 0
East Germany (2) 4 (Streich 2, Heidler, Schade)

Bulgaria: Tichanov (Manolkov); B. Dimitrov, Angelov, T. Vassilev, Stankov, Kostov (Voinov), A. Alexandrov, Bonev (Milanov), Jeliazkov, D. Dimitrov, Tavitkov.

East Germany: Croy; Schmuck, Kische, Weise, K. Muller, Hafner (Ponnerenke), Kotte (Reidel), Schade, Streich, Lauck, Heidler.

Poland (3) 5 (Deyna 2, 1 pen., Szarmach, Boniek, Terlecki)
Cyprus (0) 0

Poland: Kukla; Maculewicz, Zmuda, Mastaler, Kasperczak, Boniek, Sybis, Lubanski, Szarmach, Deyna, Terlecki.

Cyprus: Panajaras; Patikis, Papaloucas, Lilos, Stylianou, Constantinou, Michael, Savva, Kaiafas, Marcou, Kanaris.

Turkey (1) 4 (Kucuk Mehmet, Cemil 3)
Malta (0) 0

Turkey: Senol; Turgay, Alpaslan, Ali, Kucuk, Mehmet, Fatih, Kemal, Ali Kemal, Cemil, Isa.

Malta: Mizzi; Fouder, Farrugia, Dormann, Holland, Fenech, Vella, Vassallo, R. Uxerebi, G. Uxerebi, Nagro.

Belgium (1) 2 (Van Gool, Lambert)
Northern Ireland (0) 0

Belgium: Piot; Gerets, Broos, Vandendaele, Renquin, Cools, Van der Elst, Courant, Coeck, Van Gool, Lambert.

Ireland: Jennings; Nicholl, Jackson, Hunter, Rice (Nelson), Hamilton, McCreery, McGrath, Anderson, Best, McIlroy.

LEAGUE TABLES

ARGENTINA: National Championship
(Final group standings — top two from each section qualify for final playoffs)

Section A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boca Juniors	16	10	3	3	24	10	23
Quilmes	16	9	5	2	21	12	23
Independiente	16	8	5	3	24	17	21
At. Tucuman	16	7	3	6	21	17	17
Gimnasia Jujuy	16	5	5	6	17	19	15
Gim. La Plata	16	5	4	7	14	20	14
Chacarita Jnrs.	16	2	5	9	17	27	9
Temperley	16	3	3	10	17	28	9

Section B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
River Plate	16	10	4	2	31	14	24
Banfield	16	9	4	3	33	18	22
Estudiantes La P	16	8	5	3	23	14	21
Racing	16	7	3	6	26	25	17
Atlanta	16	5	5	6	23	23	15
At. Ledesma	16	6	3	7	17	18	15
San Martin T.	16	2	3	11	12	27	7
San Telmo	16	1	2	13	15	46	4

Section C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Huracan	18	12	4	2	36	15	28
Union S. Fe	18	10	5	3	32	15	25
Rosario Central	18	7	8	3	24	19	22
San Martin M.	18	6	5	7	27	28	17
Aldosivi M d P	18	6	4	8	25	33	16
Velez Sarsfield	18	4	7	7	21	24	15
Platense	18	5	4	9	19	32	14
Sp. Pat. For.	18	4	4	10	24	37	12
All Boys	18	4	4	10	16	26	12

Section D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Talleres Cor.	18	11	4	3	38	17	26
Newell's O B	18	11	4	3	38	19	26
FC Oeste	18	10	5	3	38	21	25
Argentinos Jnrs.	18	7	3	8	26	27	17
Huracan Com. R.	18	7	3	8	20	24	17
Cent. Norte Salta	18	5	6	7	17	25	16
Colon S. Fe	18	4	7	7	13	20	15
San Lorenzo BA	18	4	6	8	23	26	14
San Lor. M. d P.	18	2	3	13	24	53	7

CHILE: First Division
(Final standings)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Union Esp (*)	34	21	11	2	71	29	53
Everton (*)	34	22	9	3	76	43	53
Univ. de Chile	34	17	11	6	70	41	45
Colo Colo	34	16	12	6	57	35	44
Palestino	34	16	10	8	67	53	42
Green Cross	34	16	9	9	58	37	41
Univ. Catolica	34	14	10	10	48	32	38
Wanderers	34	11	11	12	53	60	33
Concepcion	34	12	7	15	60	59	31
Ovalle	34	9	12	13	46	44	30
Antofagasta	34	11	6	17	51	69	28
Aviacion	34	9	10	15	63	66	28
Santiago Morn.	34	10	7	17	41	58	27
Lota Schwager	34	7	13	14	48	69	27
Huachipato	34	10	6	18	50	64	26
Rangers	34	7	11	16	49	62	25
Naval	34	7	8	19	48	55	22
La Serena	34	6	5	23	44	72	17

(*) Everton beat Union Española 3-1 (after 0-0 draw) in playoff. (Naval and La Serena relegated).

URUGUAY: Major League
(Final standings — final round)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	18	14	2	2	37	10	30
Peñarol	18	8	9	1	33	17	25
Defensor	18	9	2	7	26	20	20
Danubio	18	8	4	6	29	24	20
Wanderers	18	7	6	5	30	21	20
Liverpool	18	7	6	5	22	21	20

7) Sudamerica 73 pts, 8) Fenix 11.

PERU: First Division
(three matches to go)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sport Boys	27	12	12	3	41	27	36
Union Huaral	27	14	7	6	41	23	35
Juan Aurich	27	11	11	5	33	27	33
Universitario	27	11	9	7	34	29	31
Alianza Lima	26	9	12	5	43	24	30
L. de Huanuco	26	9	10	6	31	22	30
Melgar	27	9	9	9	39	42	27
Sporting Crist.	27	7	12	8	25	25	26
Deportivo Junin	27	9	7	11	32	32	25
Col. Nac. Iquitos	27	8	9	10	23	29	25
Atletico Chalaco	27	7	11	9	36	47	25
Alfonso Ugarte	27	9	6	12	42	37	24
Cienciano	27	6	12	9	28	30	24
Defensor Lima	27	7	8	12	37	56	22
Dep. Municipal	27	5	11	11	30	41	21
Carlos M.	27	7	2	18	31	56	16

EQUADOR: National Championship
(Final round — final standings)

1) Nacional 14 pts; 2) Deportiva Cuenca, Emelec 9; 4) Liga Deportivo Universitaria 4. (Nacional qualifies for Libertadores Cup, Dep. Cuenca and Emelec play off for second place).

VENEZUELA
(Professional Championship)
(Final round — 2 games to go)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portuguesa	4	4	0	0	9	2	8
Estudiantes	4	1	1	2	3	4	3
Portugues	4	1	1	2	4	6	3
Galicia	4	1	0	3	2	6	2

COLOMBIA
Championship final round
(2 games to go)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Millionarios	8	4	2	2	11	8	10
Nacional	8	4	2	2	15	7	10
Dep. Cali	8	4	2	2	18	11	10
Junior	8	4	1	3	11	9	9
Caldas	8	3	1	4	13	16	7
Quindio	8	0	2	6	5	21	2

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Aberdeen	16	9	5	2	30	15	23
Celtic	15	9	4	2	33	16	22
Rangers	16	8	5	3	25	13	21
Dundee United	17	9	3	5	30	23	21
Hearts	18	4	8	6	25	30	16
Motherwell	17	5	5	7	27	29	15
Hibernian	17	2	11	4	15	18	15
Partick Thistle	16	4	5	7	14	22	13
Ayr United	18	4	4	10	21	38	12
Kilmarnock	18	2	6	10	21	37	10

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ajax	19	14	3	2	37	13	31
Feyenoord	19	13	4	2	49	19	30
Utrecht	19	10	4	5	37	31	24
PSV Eindhoven	19	9	5	5	36	21	23
AZ '67 Alkmaar	19	9	4	6	46	21	22
Roda JC K'rade	19	8	5	6	27	17	21
NAC Breda	19	8	5	6	30	30	21
Sparta Rotterdam	19	8	5	6	31	32	21
Haarlem	19	7	6	6	24	27	20
Den Haag	19	6	7	6	30	23	19
Twente Enschede	19	6	4	9	21	23	16
GAE Deventer	19	4	8	7	25	42	16
VVV Venlo	19	5	5	9	20	32	15
NEC Nijmegen	19	3	8	8	29	29	14
Telstar Velsen	19	5	4	10	23	37	14
EEV Eindhoven	19	4	6	9	19	44	14
Amsterdam	19	2	7	10	21	40	11
De Graafschap	19	3	4	12	15	39	10

WEST GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bor. M'gladbach	18	12	3	3	39	19	27
E. Braunschweig	17	8	7	2	29	20	23
Bayern	18	9	5	4	50	37	23
Hertha BSC	17	8	5	4	30	19	21
MSV Duisburg	18	7	7	4	35	24	21
Schalke 04	18	9	3	6	39	32	21
Cologne	18	9	2	7	36	28	20
Bor. Dortmund	18	6	6	6	37	33	18
Werder Bremen	18	6	6	6	32	30	18
Hamburger SV	18	6	6	6	30	32	18
Fort. Düsseldorf	18	7	4	7	27	29	18
VfL Bochum	18	7	3	8	29	32	17
Eintracht Frankfurt	17	6	2	9	36	36	14
Karlsruher SC	17	4	6	7	24	29	14
Kaiserslautern	18	6	2	10	24	25	14
Saarbrücken	18	4	5	9	15	27	13
Rot-Weiss Essen	18	3	4	11	24	53	10
TB Berlin	18	3	4	11	25	56	10

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	24	14	5	5	40	22	23
Ipswich	21	13	6	2	41	19	32
Manchester City	21	9	10	2	28	16	28
Arsenal	21	10	6	5	38	30	26
Middlesbrough	22	10	6	6	19	20	26
Aston Villa	21	11	3	7	43	28	25
Newcastle	19	9	6	4	32	22	24
Leicester	23	6	11	6	28	32	23
West Bromwich	21	7	8	6	29	25	22
Birmingham	21	8	5	8	32	28	21
Manchester Utd.	20	7	6	7	33	29	21
Coventry	20	7	6	7	25	25	20
Leeds	20	6	8	6	25	26	20
Norwich	21	7	5	9	22	28	19
Everton	21	6	6	9	31	40	18
Stoke	19	6	5	8	12	22	17
Derby	19	4	8	7	22	25	16
Queen's PR	19	6	4	9	23	29	16
Tottenham	21	5	5	11	28	43	15
Bristol City	18	4	5	9	17	22	13
West Ham	21	4	5	12	20	34	13
Sunderland	23	2	5	16	13	36	9

EGYPT

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ittihad	13	8	4	1	11	4	20
Zamalek	12	8	3	1	25	6	19
Ahly	11	9	1	1	16	4	19
Esco	13	7	3	3	19	13	17
Plastics	12	4	5	3	8	9	13
Mahalla	11	3	6	2	10	9	12
Mansoura	12	3	5	4	9	11	11
Ismaili	11	2	6	3	7	8	10
Suez	12	3	4	5	10	12	10
Misri	12	2	6	4	7	9	10
K. Alsheik	12	1	8	3	6	10	10
Arsenal	12	2	5	5	8	10	9
Olympic	12	2	5	5	6	12	9
Aviation	13	1	5	7	9	22	7
E.S.R.	14	1	4	9	7	19	6

ISRAEL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	pts
Maccabi, Tel Aviv	15	12	3	0	31	12	27
Maccabi, Nathanya	15	7	4	4	21	17	18
Maccabi, Jaffa	15	7	4	4	15	12	18
Hacoch, Ramat Gan	15	6	5	4	16	12	17
Hapoel, Tel Aviv	15	5	6	4	22	17	16
Beitar, Jerusalem	15	5	6	4	14	11	16
Hapoel, Yaoud	15	3	10	2	10	9	16
Beitar, Tel Aviv	15	5	5	5	18	15	15
Shimson, Tel Aviv	15	4	6	5	16	16	14
Hapoel, Haifa	15	5	4	6	16	17	14
Hapoel, Beer Sheba	15	5	4	6	14	18	14
Hapoel, Jerusalem	15	4	5	6	12	14	13
Hapoel, Accra	15	3	7	5	12	19	13
Maccabi Haifa	15	3	5	7	17	22	11
Hapoel, Kear Saba	15	2	7	6	16	25	11
Maccabi Petah Tikva	15	3	1	11	11	25	7

Player Portrait on Ralf Edstroem

That victory was enough. PSV cruised on to the title:

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
34	23	9	2	82	26	55

But, though champions, Rijvers was not satisfied. He was concerned that Edstroem was not yet strong enough for the arduous programme approaching in 1975-76 — defending the championship and competing in the Champions' Cup.

Accordingly, he worked harder than ever to encourage greater teamwork and picked out Nick Deacy, a £20,000 bargain from English Third Division Hereford, as Edstroem's understudy. Deacy had impressed PSV during an under-21 club tournament.

Thankfully there were no immediate problems. Edstroem hit four in a 6-2 win over Ajax in September and scored one in each leg as PSV beat Linfield 2-1, 8-0 in the first round of the Champions' Cup.

His second leg goal, scored in the 59th minute, made amends for a rare penalty miss after he had been tripped seven minutes before. He scored again as PSV did well to win 3-1 away to Ruch Chorzow in the next round and was instrumental in the 4-0 second leg win, though this time he didn't find the net.

The quarter finals paired PSV with another tough East European nut, Hajduk Split and PSV went down 2-0 in the first leg. It wasn't one of Edstroem's happiest games. He had a "goal" disallowed for offside, and another fine shot drew a brilliant save from Mirza Meskovic.

This was a busy time for PSV. The following Wednesday they beat neighbours Eindhoven 8-1 in a Cup semi-final with Edstroem getting two, and the next weekend — in a Cup Final rehearsal — beat Roda 1-0.

Celebrate

It took extra time for PSV to beat Hajduk and make the Champions' Cup semi-finals, but to celebrate they went top of the league with a 3-1 away win over Ajax, to go clear at last of Feyenoord. Now for a series of vital matches.

First came the visit to France for the Champions' Cup first leg with Saint-Etienne. PSV were narrow favourites to go on, which seemed borne out when they lost this away leg only 1-0.

But . . . all the time stamina was draining from them. The Dutch Cup final came in between the Saint-Etienne tie and it wasn't until extra time that Edstroem scored the only goal of the game to beat Roda.

Now for Saint-Etienne again — and a most unhappy match. First Rene van der Kerkhof upset morale by saying on the eve of the second leg that he wanted to go to Spain, then just 15 minutes into the game Edstroem suffered concussion in a collision with Saint-Etienne's Yugoslav goalkeeper, Yan Curkovic. He was off the field for 10 minutes, then returned. But he couldn't get into the game, PSV grew more anxious and disjointed and he was substituted by Deacy at half-time.

There were no goals in the second half either and PSV were left free to beat Feyenoord 4-1 in the penultimate league match and finish one point clear:

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
34	24	5	5	89	27	53

● Continued from page 27

But the season ended under a cloud for Edstroem. Eight months before he suffered what seemed a minor thigh injury in a game with Feyenoord. Now came a recurrence, as Sweden went down to a surprise 2-1 home defeat by Denmark. Still, the season was over, he could rest . . . and make a comeback in PSV's three-match pre-season tour of his native Sweden.

But perhaps he came back too soon, perhaps he was too keen to do well. Whatever the reason Edstroem hobbled off after just 20 minutes of the first game. His thigh had gone again and he missed the next two games as well as the Teresa Herrera tournament in Coruna, Spain, where Spain lost 2-0 to the new South American champions, Cruzeiro and beat Penarol on penalties after a 1-1 draw.

Appearance

The Dutch league started without him and PSV didn't do particularly well. Rijvers introduced Edstroem for 45 minutes against Ajax at the start of September, but his appearance wasn't a success and PSV lost 1-0.

Edstroem resigned himself to another couple of weeks on the sidelines and made a happier return in the 5-2 away win over Go Ahead Deventer — back just in time for the Champions' Cup second round tie with . . . Saint-Etienne. PSV badly needed to do well. Already, after just nine games, they were five points adrift of Feyenoord in the league. But though the visit to France meant a repeat of last season's 1-0 defeat, Rijvers was far more concerned at the manner of defeat this time.

"If Saint-Etienne had played as they did last season, we'd have lost about three," he said.

Fully fit

Edstroem was clearly far from match fit and his slow reflexes meant that he wasted two half chances which, fully fit, he might have put away easily. In the 63rd minute Rijvers pulled him off and sent on Deacy. "I was making signs to the bench long before that," admitted Edstroem afterwards. He had been completely played out of the game by Oswaldo Piazza, the strong Argentinian centre back who also had time to move upfield and score the winner.

The second leg proved no happier for Edstroem or PSV — despite the encouragement he had of two penalty goals in a 3-2 defeat by Feyenoord inbetween. He thought that the absence of the injured Saint-Etienne skipper and midfield general Jean-Michel Larque would be to PSV's advantage. But it didn't work out that way. Again he couldn't get into the game.

Piazza, who even beat him regularly in the air, asked journalists afterwards: "Did you see Edstroem? You were lucky then. Was he playing? Are you sure? I didn't notice him."

For the first time in his career Edstroem had hit the kind of patch when nothing will go right. But, after all, he's still only 24 and he and PSV still have plenty of time to come back out of the shadows.

Edstroem will be there for another two years, it seems. He signed a new contract last summer, much to the disappointment of Real Madrid, who had been keeping tabs on negotiations. They had hoped to sign Edstroem — as had Espanol Barcelona — after the 1974 World Cup, but the Swede said he had no wish to leave Holland. New York Cosmos even turned their greedy eyes on him in mid-1975 as the ideal man to link up with Pele. "He'll be the next player we sign," said the Cosmos president at the time. Promises, promises . . .

The major influences on Edstroem's career have been his successful start with Atvidaberg, the World Cup and his personal satisfaction in becoming a member of a successful team wherever he has been — be it Atvidaberg, PSV or Sweden.

For Atvidaberg and Sweden he has been happy to let Sandberg — "We can play together with our eyes closed" — take a lot of the goal-scoring glory, and he also talks modestly about the last World Cup with the emphasis always on what it did for Swedish football rather than what it did for Ralf Edstroem. "It would be difficult to envisage us doing any better," he says.

Quality

"With a bit of luck we might have beaten Poland. But I think we stood up for the quality of Swedish football well enough. At the start they compared us with Zaire, Haiti and Australia.

"But everyone respected us when we left."

Edstroem proved in West Germany that he can take goals as well as make them. He can be brilliant with his head and astonishingly nimble with his feet. He is a thinking, mobile footballer who has proved himself an ideal professional.

His own philosophy he expresses in this way: "Scoring isn't an obsession with me. I don't think I have a sniper's mentality. If the occasion presents itself I don't like to waste it. But I try to play mainly for the team.

"What is important is for the team to do well, not for me to be some sort of pedestal. A good pass can be far more valuable than a hurried shot wide . . ."

JOHN GREIG Glasgow Rangers

World SOCCER

TRABZONSPOR (Turkey)